

INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

OVERHAULED



This picture provided by the office of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords on Monday, March 22, 2010 shows damage to her office in Tucson, Ariz. The congressional office was vandalized a few hours after the House vote overhauling the nation's health care system, authorities said Monday.

Read more on Page A8

SPORTS NEWS

BAY HILL



Arnold Palmer tips his hat, as the gallery cheers, before he tees off during the Pro-Am round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at Bay Hill in Orlando, Fla., Wednesday, March 24, 2010.

Read more on Page A12



In this Nov. 15, 2009, file photo U.S. President Barack Obama speaks with his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev on the sidelines of the APEC summit in Singapore. Obama said the U.S. and Russia would have a replacement treaty on reducing nuclear arms ready for approval by year's end. The Obama administration is taking a go-slow approach to one of the touchiest and least-discussed national security issues: whether to withdraw the last remaining Cold War-era U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, administration officials say.

Associated Press

Pact to cut US-Russia nukes; signing in 2 weeks

LYNN BERRY
ROBERT BURNS

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — After long and trying negotiations, the United States and Russia have reached agreements for a historic new treaty to reduce the nuclear arsenals of former Cold War rivals, officials said Wednesday. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev are to sign the pact in two weeks in Prague.

The deal is seen as an important step toward rolling back global nuclear dangers and sealing an increased level of trust and cooperation between the U.S. and Russia, who possess the vast majority of the world's nuclear arms and have labored under strained relations in recent years.

Obama and Medvedev are expected to seal the deal when they talk by telephone this week,

setting the stage for a White House campaign to win ratification by the U.S. Senate. The treaty also must win approval by the Russian Duma, and the two legislative processes are likely to take months.

Robert S. Norris, a longtime analyst of U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals, said Senate ratification would not be easy.

"Hard negotiations with the Russians will now be followed by hard negotiations with Republican senators to achieve ratification," Norris said.

Although the State Department said the two countries still were working out unspecified final technical details, spokesman Mark Toner said there had been discussions with the Czech government about holding a signing ceremony in Prague, where Obama declared last April his vision of a nuclear-free world.

Continued on Next Page



In this undated photo provided by the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, Pope Benedict XVI, left, poses with Irish Bishop John Magee at the Vatican.

Associated Press

Irish bishop resigns, apologizes to abuse victims

SHAWN POGATCHNIK
VERENA SCHMITT-ROSCHMANN

Associated Press Writers

DUBLIN (AP) — Pope Benedict XVI accepted the resignation of an Irish bishop for his failure to report child-molesting priests to police — and faced a renewed reminder of the German abuse case most closely linked to his own time in charge of Munich.

Bishop John Magee — who served as secretary to Benedict's three papal predecessors before returning to Ireland in 1987—apologized Wednesday to victims of any pedophile priests who were kept in parish posts during his 23 years overseeing the southwest Irish diocese of Cloyne.

Continued on Page 6

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U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, left, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov shake hands before their talks in Moscow, Russia, Thursday, March 18, 2010. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Thursday opened two days of talks with Russian leaders on nuclear arms control and other security issues, and separately with top international diplomats on the outlook for bringing Israel and the Palestinians back to peace talks.

Associated Press

US-RUSSIA

Continued from Front Page

In fact, Czech officials went ahead and announced that Prague would host the signing.

They did not give a date, but Russian and U.S. officials said

it was expected to be April 8.

The new agreement to reduce long-range nuclear weapons would replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which expired in December. An important feature of the new deal is

that it includes a mechanism for verifying compliance by both sides, an element that was absent from a 2002 deal, known as the Moscow Treaty, that accelerated weapons reductions laid out in the 1991 treaty.

The Moscow Treaty set limits on both sides' strategic nuclear warheads at between 1,700 and 2,200. The new deal, whose provisions have not been made public, is expected to lower that to about 1,500. It also would reduce the permissible number of strategic launchers, the missiles and bombs that deliver warheads to their targets.

Obama spent an hour Wednesday in the White House briefing Democratic Sen. John Kerry, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Sen. Richard Lugar, the committee's ranking Republican. Both would play major roles in ratification of the emerging treaty.

Kerry said he and Lugar would hold hearings to examine details.

"A well-designed treaty will

send an important message to the rest of the world that America is prepared to lead efforts with key stakeholders to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons," Kerry said.

Maria Lipman, an expert with the Moscow Carnegie Center think tank, said this week the new treaty not only could reduce the size of both countries' nuclear arsenals but also change the psychology of the U.S.-Russian relationship, which has been strained for at least the past six years.

"Gradually the attitude may change to where America is not seen from Russia as a force to be treated with suspicion," she said.

Richard Burt, a former U.S. ambassador and chief U.S. negotiator of the original START agreement, described the about-to-be-announced follow-on treaty as the first significant arms reduction agreement in nearly two decades. He said it advances momentum toward eliminating nuclear weapons.

"This agreement will set the stage for further cuts in

U.S. and Russian arsenals and multilateral negotiations for reductions by all nuclear weapons countries," Burt said.

Two senior U.S. officials in Washington said the technical issues still to be resolved were in an "annex" to the main treaty, and they foresaw no obstacles to completing the deal within days. They spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitive discussions. One official said an announcement that the treaty is complete is expected by Friday.

A Kremlin source, speaking by telephone to The Associated Press, said all the documents, including the treaty, had been agreed. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said last week that the treaty was 20 pages long, with an extensive protocol attached.

Negotiations, which have been under way in Geneva since last spring, became bogged down in recent months on disputes over verification measures and Russia's objection to U.S. missile defense plans for Europe. □



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Discharging gays to draw more scrutiny in military

ANNE FLAHERTY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Discharging a gay person for violating the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy will draw unprecedented scrutiny under new orders from Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who is already pushing to repeal the ban on gays serving openly in the U.S. military.

Guidelines to be announced Thursday call for testimony from third parties to be given

under oath. The discharge of enlisted personnel must be approved by officers who hold a rank equivalent to a one-star general or above, according to military and defense officials familiar with the plan. They spoke on condition of anonymity ahead of the announcement.

The goal is to ensure that the law is applied fairly and consistently across the military and that flimsy testimony from third parties

is eliminated, the officials said. The plan is considered a stopgap measure until Congress decides whether to repeal the 1993 law. President Barack Obama has said the ban unfairly punishes gays and has called on Congress to lift it. Gates agrees but says he wants to move slowly and has ordered an internal assessment, due Dec. 1, on how the Defense Department could lift the ban without damaging morale or hurting

recruitment.

In the meantime, Gates has said he wants to find ways to implement the law more "humanely" and prevent cases in which gay servicemembers are outed by someone carrying a grudge.

Gay rights groups say the plan to require high-level scrutiny for discharges under "don't ask, don't tell" is a step in the right direction but add that Congress must still act to lift the ban.

"Servicemembers would still be leaving the services under 'don't ask, don't tell' every day, so what we need is repeal," said Aubrey Sarvis, executive director, Servicemembers Legal Defense Fund.

Military officials, Republicans and even some conservative Democrats have been reluctant to embrace the change. They say they support Gates'

review of the policy but that no changes should be made if they might hurt military effectiveness.

Sen. Carl Levin chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and other Democrats say the time has come to repeal the ban and have called for an immediate moratorium on dismissals.

Nathaniel Frank, a senior research fellow with the Palm Center, which supports a repeal of the ban, said it is unclear how much of an impact the new guidelines would have because regulations already restrict third-party allegations.

"Anything that continues to allow the discharge of servicemembers for something that research shows has no bearing on military effectiveness will not go far enough," Frank said. □

Calif. voters to decide whether to legalize pot

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ

Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO, Calif. —

California voters will decide whether to legalize recreational marijuana use for adults, after the secretary of state on Wednesday certified the initiative for the November ballot.

It would become the first state to legalize recreational marijuana if the proposition is approved. Marijuana use is legal for medicinal purposes in California and 14 other states, but the drug is illegal under federal law. Secretary of State Debra Bowen certified that the petitions seeking to place the question on the ballot had more than 433,971 valid voter signatures, the minimum number needed to qualify.

If approved, the initiative would allow those 21 years and older to possess up to one ounce of marijuana, enough to roll several marijuana cigarettes. Residents also could cultivate the plant in limited quantities.

Local governments would decide whether to permit and tax marijuana sales.

"The tide has turned," said Dan Newman, a strategist with the campaign backing the measure. "The combination of the broken budget and dysfunctional cannabis laws have created

the perfect storm for this initiative to pass in November."

Opponents refer to marijuana as a gateway drug, meaning its use is believed to lead young people to try other, harder drugs. They worry that legalization would persuade more people to try it, worsening the nation's drug culture.

"How can our kids say no when the adults around them are saying yes?" asked Aimee Hendle, a spokeswoman for Californians for Drug Free

Youth.


Stephen Gutwillig, California director for the Drug Policy Alliance, said certification of the ballot initiative marks a watershed moment in the decades-long struggle.

"Banning marijuana outright has been a profound disaster, fueling a massive, increasingly brutal underground economy, wasting billions in scarce law enforcement resources and making criminals of countless law-abiding citizens," he said. □

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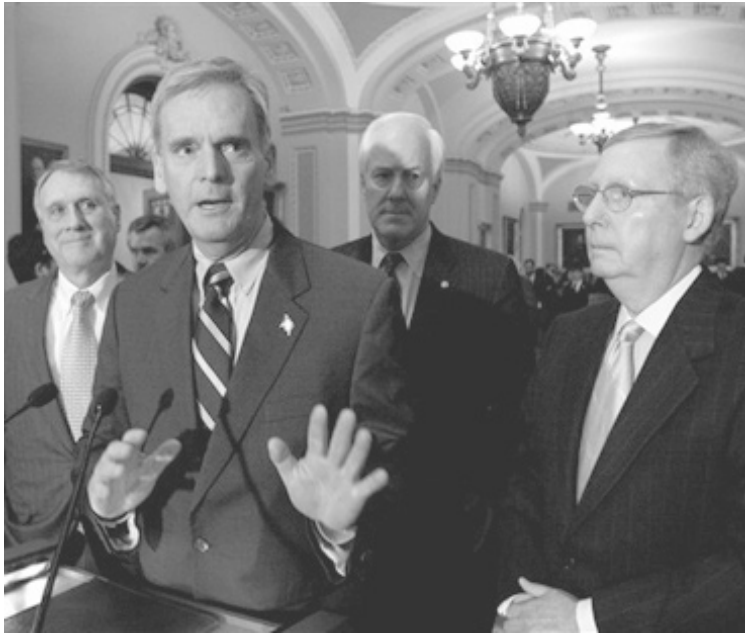


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Republicans in final drive to stall health bill



Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H., second from left, speaks to reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, March 23, 2010, following the weekly caucus luncheons. From left are, Senate Minority Whip John Kyl of Ariz., Gregg, Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Ky.

Associated Press

ERICA WERNER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a final drive to thwart President Barack Obama's health care remake, Republican senators plan to force Democrats to run a gantlet of politically dicey votes before they can finish a companion bill to the landmark law.

Voting was expected to start late Wednesday on a full list of Republican amendments to a "sidecar" bill making changes Democrats agreed to in the main legislation already signed by Obama.

Obama just signed the bill into law Tuesday, declaring it "a new season in America" at a celebrative White House ceremony. The main legislation

would extend coverage to 32 million uninsured Americans over 10 years with a first-time requirement for nearly everyone to carry insurance and would ban insurance company practices such as denying coverage to sick people.

Approval of the "fix-it" bill at the end of this week is virtually assured, since it's being debated under fast-track budget rules that allow passage with a simple majority instead of the 60 votes usually required for action in the 100-seat Senate. Democrats control 59 Senate seats.

That didn't stop Republicans, who are unanimously opposed, from using the floor debate that began Tuesday afternoon as an opportunity to repeat the accusations they've lobbed at Obama's health legislation for the past year: that it raises taxes, slashes Medicare and includes a burdensome and constitutionally questionable requirement for nearly all Americans to carry health insurance.

Major components of the fix-it legislation include scaling back a tax on high-cost insurance plans opposed by labor unions, higher taxes on upper-income earners, and closing the coverage gap in prescription benefits in the existing Medicare government health care program for the elderly.

But Republicans have other ideas. Sen. Tom Coburn wants a vote on his amendment to prohibit coverage of Viagra for sex offenders. Sen. Judd Gregg wants savings from Medicare cuts plowed back into the health care program for seniors, instead of being used to expand coverage to the uninsured. Sen. Mike Enzi wants to gut penalties on employers whose workers wind up getting taxpayer subsidized coverage.

Democrats are vowing to bat down the Republican amendments one-by-one, and also hope Republicans won't succeed with any procedural objections.

"All of the amendments we'll take care of. Points of order —

we'll see what they do," said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, a Democrat.

The main suspenses surrounding this week's debate is whether the fix-it bill can emerge from the Senate unchanged. If it does, it can go straight to the president for his signature, since it's already passed the House of Representatives. If the Senate changes it even in a minor way, the legislation would have to go back to the House to be passed again, a prospect House leaders are prepared for but say they don't expect.

The fixes under consideration by the Senate were demanded by House Democrats as their price for passing the mammoth overhaul legislation that will extend coverage to 32 million uninsured Americans over the next decade.

"They're hoping that Americans don't notice this is another power grab," Republican Senator Jim DeMint said of Democrats. "So we're going to bring these issues up."

Although the battle may soon be over in Congress, opponents already have launched a campaign from the outside, with 13 state attorneys general, all but one Republican, suing Tuesday to overturn the legislation on grounds it is unconstitutional. And Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell served notice Tuesday of Republicans' continued campaign against the legislation ahead of the November congressional elections. "The slogan will be 'repeal and replace,' 'repeal and replace,'" McConnell said. The president on Wednesday upheld his end of a deal reached with some moderate Democrats by signing an executive order affirming existing law against federal funding of abortions, except in cases of rape, incest or danger to the woman's life. The critical bloc of anti-abortion Democrats in the House had pledged to vote against the health care package unless given greater assurances that it would not amend current law. □

Dems express safety concerns after protests

JIM ABRAMS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democratic leaders on Wednesday said they are concerned about the personal safety of lawmakers because of threats linked to intense opposition to the health care overhaul law.

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said the FBI and Capitol Police briefed Democrats on how to handle perceived security threats and that those who feel they are at risk will be "getting attention from the proper authorities."

Hoyer said more than 10 Democratic lawmakers have reported incidents, but he did not whether any are now receiving added security. Normally only those in leadership positions have personal security guards. Protests swirled around the Capitol during debate on the health care overhaul last weekend. Protesters hurled racial slurs at several black lawmakers and one protester spat at a black lawmaker.

Rep. Jim Clyburn of South Carolina, the Democratic whip and a senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus, said he has vivid memories of



House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland, right, and House Majority Whip James Clyburn of South Carolina meet with reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington before President Barack Obama addresses the Democratic Caucus, Saturday, March 20, 2010.

Associated Press

history and that the scene on the street Saturday was "very reminiscent of our history." Bricks were thrown through windows at two Democratic Party offices in western New York, including a district office of Rep. Louise Slaughter, who played a key role in getting the health care bill through the House.

The Tucson, Arizona, congressional office of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords was also vandalized a few hours after the House vote.

Hoyer said there were incidents

such as people yelling that Democratic lawmakers should be put on firing lines and posters with the faces of lawmakers in the crosshairs of a target.

While not directly criticizing Republicans, Hoyer said that "any show of appreciation for such actions encourages such action." Several Republicans stood on the second-floor Speaker's Balcony overlooking the West Front of the Capitol cheering on the protesters and waving signs such as "Kill the bill." □

Doctor pleads not guilty to molesting 100 patients

RANDALL CHASE

Associated Press Writer

GEORGETOWN, Delaware (AP) — A Delaware pediatrician pleaded not guilty Wednesday to charges that he molested more than 100 of his patients, many of them repeatedly, and videotaped the assaults.

A public defender for Dr. Earl Bradley entered the plea before Sussex County Superior Court Judge T. Henley Graves. Bradley said nothing during the two-minute hearing.

Bradley, who was arrested in December, is being held in lieu of bail that Graves raised to \$4.7 million. The 471 counts against Bradley include rape, sexual exploitation of a child, unlawful sexual contact, continuous sexual abuse of a child, assault, and reckless endangering. His medical license has been permanently revoked by Delaware officials.

Bradley, dressed in a

gray prison jumpsuit and bound by handcuffs and leg shackles, was escorted into the courtroom by two security guards. His sheepish demeanor was accented by the bangs of his long hair drooping over his forehead, and he sported the same graying beard seen in photos after he was arrested.

As the courtroom emptied after the hearing, two women seated in the spectator section sobbed, consoled by a third woman.

Bradley's public defenders, Dean Johnson and Stephanie Tsantes, declined to comment on specifics of the case after the hearing.

"We're not going to have a comment on anything from this point forward," Johnson said, adding that they didn't want to add to the publicity surrounding the case.

Bradley was assigned taxpayer-funded legal counsel when his two private lawyers dropped out

following a move by the attorney general's office to freeze Bradley's assets.

A grand jury indictment returned last month alleges that Bradley videotaped sexual attacks on 103 children, dating back to December 1998. Many victims were assaulted repeatedly, the indictment said.

Prosecutors have said they expect to file more charges and believe there may be more victims than those seen on the videotapes.

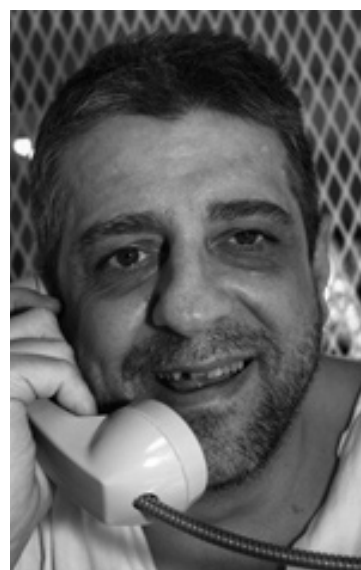
Following years of suspicions among parents and questions about his strange behavior from colleagues, Bradley was arrested after a 2-year-old girl told her mother that the doctor hurt her in December when he took her to a basement room of his Lewes office after an exam.

The judge scheduled a status conference in the case for May 17. □



This file photo released Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009 by the Delaware State Police shows Dr. Earl Bradley. A grand jury returned a 160-page indictment Monday, Feb. 22, 2010 against Dr. Earl Bradley of Lewes with 471 counts of sexual crimes. Prosecutors expect to add more counts to a lengthy indictment against Bradley, charged with serial molestation of 103 children as investigators urge former patients and parents to come forward.

Associated Press



This March 17, 2010 photo shows Texas death row inmate Hank Skinner in the visiting cage at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Polunsky Unit outside Livingston, Texas. Skinner is scheduled to be executed on Wednesday, March 24, 2010. His lawyers, pointing to "troubling, unresolved questions about whether Mr. Skinner could have committed the murders," awaited the outcome of an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court that sought to stop his scheduled lethal injection so they can persuade a court his constitutional rights to due process were violated. They've also asked Gov. Rick Perry to issue a 30-day reprieve so testing can be conducted.

Associated Press

Execution halted for Texas man claiming innocence

MICHAEL GRACZYK

Associated Press Writer

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court on Wednesday stopped the execution of condemned prisoner Hank Skinner about an hour before he could have been taken to the Texas death chamber.

Skinner asked the court and the governor of Texas for the delay for DNA testing that he insisted could clear him in a triple slaying.

The brief order grants him the delay but does not ensure he will get such testing. Gov. Rick Perry had not decided on the delay.

Skinner, 47, faced lethal injection for the bludgeoning and strangling of his girlfriend, 40-year-old Twila Jean Busby, and the stabbings of her two adult sons. The slayings occurred at their home in the Texas Panhandle town of Pampa on New Year's Eve in 1993.

The court order came as relatives of Busby were climbing the steps of the Huntsville prison to prepare to witness his punishment.

In the order, the justices said they would put off the execution until they decide whether to review his case. If the court refuses the review, the reprieve is lifted, according to the order, and Skinner would become eligible for another execution date.

Skinner, in a small holding cell a few feet

(meters) from the death chamber, was informed of the reprieve in a phone call from his lawyer.

"I had made up my mind I was going to die," he said. "I'm eager to get the DNA testing so I can prove my innocence and get the hell out of here."

"I'm greatly relieved. I feel like I really won today."

On Tuesday, Skinner spent several hours with Sandrine Ageorges-Skinner, a 49-year-old French national who has been his wife since 2008.

France's ambassador to the U.S. asked Perry to pardon Skinner or halt the execution, French Foreign Ministry spokesman Bernard Valero said Wednesday. President Nicolas Sarkozy also offered "France's support" to Skinner's wife, Valero said. France opposes capital punishment.

Prosecutors argued Skinner wasn't entitled to testing of evidence that wasn't analyzed before his 1995 trial. Courts over the years since his conviction have agreed, rejecting his appeals.

Skinner's attorneys wanted DNA testing on vaginal swabs taken from Busby at the time of her autopsy, fingernail clippings, a knife found on the porch of Busby's house and a second knife found in a plastic bag in the house, a towel with the second knife, a jacket next to Busby's body and any hairs found in her hands that were not destroyed in previous testing. Only the hairs were tested previously and those

results were inconclusive, according to court documents.

Skinner's trial lawyer, Harold Comer, a former Gray County prosecutor, chose not to test all the evidence because he feared the outcome would be more damaging to his client.

Skinner and his lawyers said the killer could have been Twila Busby's uncle, Robert Donnell, who died in 1997. Donnell, who has been described in court documents as violent when drinking, attended the same New Year's Eve party as Busby while Skinner was passed out at home. She left the party after complaining that Donnell made crude sexual remarks toward her. Partygoers later noticed Donnell also had left. □





This is an undated file photo of Irish Bishop John Magee. The Vatican said Pope Benedict XVI has accepted the resignation of Irish Bishop John Magee in the country's sex abuse scandal. The 73-year-old Magee has been accused of mishandling complaints against priests in his diocese of Cloyne. The Vatican said Wednesday March 24, 2010 without elaboration that the pope had accepted his resignation.

Associated Press

VATICAN
Continued from Front Page

"To those whom I have failed in any way, or through any omission of mine have made suffer, I beg forgiveness and pardon," the 73-year-old Magee said in his resignation statement.

Irish government investigators are continuing to explore Cloyne abuse cover-ups and expect to report findings later this year. The Vatican is on the defensive over ever-unfolding accusations that church leaders have protected child abusers for decades in many countries.

Benedict last week issued an unprecedented letter to Ireland addressing the 16 years of church cover-up scandals here. But he has yet to say anything about his handling of the Rev. Peter Hullermann, the case known to have developed on the pope's watch when, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, he oversaw the Munich Archdiocese from 1977 to 1982.

Munich Archdiocese spokesman Bernhard Kellner

said Wednesday a new person has come forward claiming to have been abused in 1998 by Hullermann. Kellner gave no other details.

Hullermann had been accused of abusing boys in Essen, western Germany, in the 1970s when Ratzinger approved his 1980 transfer to Munich to receive psychological treatment for pedophilia. Until recent years the church in many countries referred child abusers in the priesthood to private clinics — and not the police — when accused of crimes.

Hullermann was convicted in 1986 of abusing a youth, but church officials insist the new abuse happened after Ratzinger was already promoted to higher duties in the Vatican. Hullerman recently was removed again from parish duties after he was discovered still to be in regular contact with children.

In a related development, the German government announced Wednesday it is

forming a 40-strong panel of experts to investigate the extent of child abuse in Catholic and other institutions for children. The commission will be asked to recommend reforms to Germany's current statutes of limitations so that abuse victims can pursue priests and other church officials for civil damages and criminal liability. Irish society is still debating the merits of Saturday's message from Benedict apologizing for decades of unchecked child abuse by priests, nuns and other clerics. The letter criticized Irish bishops, promised a Vatican inspection of unspecified dioceses and religious orders in Ireland — but accepted no Vatican responsibility for promoting a culture of cover-up.

Benedict also has yet to accept resignation offers from three other Irish bishops who were linked to cover-ups of child-abuse cases in the Dublin Archdiocese, the subject of a government-ordered investigation that published its

findings four months ago.

Magee had been expected to resign ever since an Irish church-commissioned investigation into the mishandling of child-abuse reports in Cloyne ruled two years ago that Magee and his senior diocesan aides failed to tell police quickly about two 1990s cases.

The church and government suppressed publication of that report until December 2008. Magee immediately faced calls to quit from victims' rights activists and some parishioners. They accused him of ignoring an Irish church policy enacted in 1996 requiring all abuse cases to be reported to police.

Magee remained Cloyne bishop in name but transferred day-to-day responsibilities to his superior, Archbishop Dermot Clifford, in March 2009.

Cardinal Sean Brady, leader of Ireland's 4 million Catholics, offered prayers and praise for Magee. □



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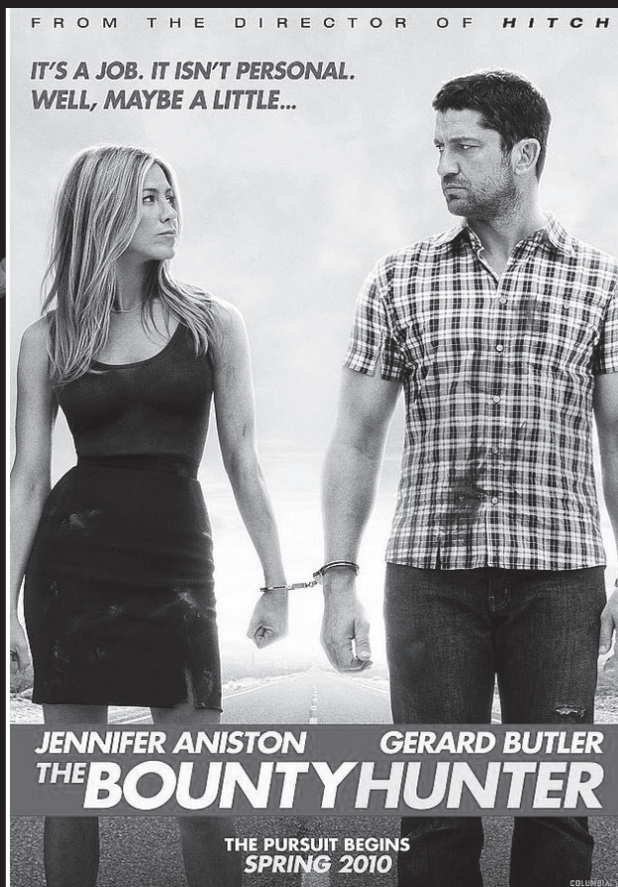
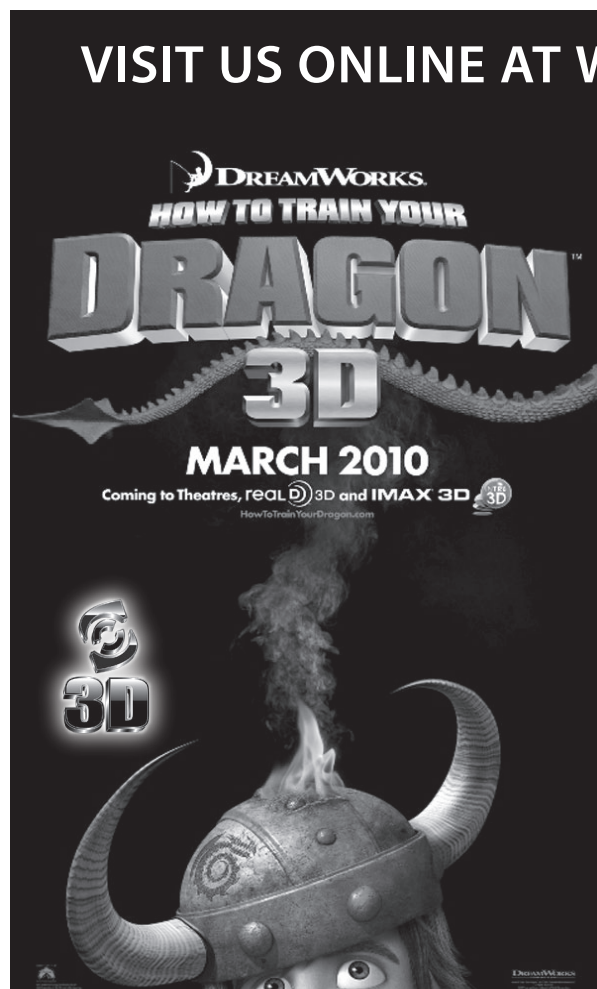
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	daily:			
	matinee:	2:00	late show:	12:15
PG-13	THE BOUNTY HUNTER			
	daily:	5:45	8:15	
	matinee:	12:30	3:15	late show: 11:00
R	EDGE OF DARKNESS	4:30	7:00	9:30
	daily:			
	matinee:	1:45	late show:	12:00
PG	BROOKLYN'S FINEST	6:00	8:45	
	daily:			
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PG	VALENTINE'S DAY	6:30	9:00	
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PG	ALICE IN WONDERLAND	6:00	8:30	
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PG	HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON	4:00	6:15	8:30
NEW	daily:			
	matinee:	1:25	late show:	11:00
PG	DIARY OF A WIMPY KID	4:30	6:45	
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	matinee:	12:00	2:15	late show:
R	CASE 39	5:45	8:15	
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	matinee:	12:15	3:00	late show: 11:00
PG-13	OUR FAMILY WEDDING	5:30	7:45	9:45
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	matinee:	12:45	3:00	late show: 12:00
R	FROM PARIS WITH LOVE	9:00		
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	matinee:		late show:	11:30
R	GREEN ZONE	6:30	9:00	
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	matinee:	1:00	3:45	late show: 11:30
R	SHUTTER ISLAND	5:45	8:45	
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French sex workers protest legal brothels

KATIE KING

Associated Press Writer

PARIS (AP) — Dozens of French sex workers proclaiming themselves proud to be prostitutes marched Wednesday to protest a lawmaker's proposal to legalize brothels in France, arguing that such a law would deny them the freedom to work on their own.

A lawmaker in France's governing party has proposed reopening brothels just over six decades after they were banned in order to move prostitutes off the streets and provide them with medical, financial and legal protection.

The protesters say the proposal limits their options to make their own decisions — and are demanding, instead, a repeal of a 2003 law that outlaws solicitation.

"We are workers and we want the choice to work as we want," said Thierry Schaffauser, 27, a sex worker from Paris now living in London. "For doctors, they can work for a company or they can be independent. I think the importance

is to let people choose how they want to work."

Dozens participated in a daylong conference on prostitution at the Senate, organized by a lawmaker opposed to the proposed bill. Lawmaker Chantal Brunel, who proposed the law, was not present. After the conference, the men and women marched through Paris' Left Bank, many dressed in their skimpy work attire. Some carried signs reading, "You sleep with us, you vote against us."

"There's nothing to be ashamed of," said Lola Bruna, a 19-year-old sex worker from Paris. They "used to say that this is the oldest job ever, and that's not for no reason."

Brothels were legally outlawed in France in 1946.

The 2003 law tightened restrictions against prostitution by making solicitation punishable with two months in prison and a €3,750 (\$5,000) fine.

"The question is not, for example, about the brothels," said Alima Boumediene-Thiery, the Green



French sex workers take part in a march in Paris, Wednesday, March 24, 2010, protesting a lawmaker's proposal to legalize brothels in France, which means they would be working for a "company". They want the repeal of a 2003 law penalizing solicitation, which they say prevents them from working independently in the open.

Associated Press

Party senator who organized Wednesday's conference. "The question is about the recognition of the rights of these men and women who have made these choices that we must respect." □



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Israel approves new building in east Jerusalem



Adnan Husseini, Director of Islamic Waqf, which administers the holy site of Al-Aqsa, and whose family has formerly owned the Shepherd Hotel, is reflected in a car as he stands in front the Shepherd Hotel in East Jerusalem, Wednesday, March 24, 2010. The Jerusalem municipality has approved 20 new apartments for Jews in place of the Shepherd Hotel in east Jerusalem, the city said Wednesday, in a move that could stir a new diplomatic crisis with the United States just as Israel's leader is in Washington on a fence-mending visit.

ARON HELLER

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) — The Jerusalem municipality has approved 20 new apartments for Jews in an Arab neighborhood of east Jerusalem, the city said Wednesday, in a move that could stir a new diplomatic crisis with the United States just as Israel's leader is in Washington on a fence-mending visit.

The announcement marked the second time this month that Israel has announced new construction in the disputed section of the holy city during face-to-face meetings between top U.S. and Israeli officials.

Associated Press

The Obama administration is seeking "clarification" of the latest building plan and continues to believe Israeli construction in Jerusalem is destructive to the Mideast peace process, said White House spokesman Tommy Vietor. Israeli lawmaker Eitan Cabel accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of unnecessarily provoking the U.S.

"Is this another 'unfortunate' mistake? Is this another 'misunderstanding?'" said Cabel, a member of the Labor Party, which sits in the governing coalition.

"Netanyahu decided to spit

into Obama's eye, this time from up close. He and his pyromaniac ministers insist on setting the Middle East ablaze."

On Wednesday evening, Israel's Channel 10 TV reported that an additional 200 apartments were approved last month for private land near the first 20. The report could not be confirmed, and the Jerusalem municipality had no immediate comment.

The U.S. views Israeli building in east Jerusalem, the part of the city claimed by Palestinians as their future capital, as disruptive to Mideast peacemaking. Israel, which captured east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war, insists the city cannot be divided and says it has the right to build anywhere.

These differences erupted into a crisis earlier this month when Israel announced during a visit by Vice President Joe Biden that it plans to build 1,600 new apartments for Jews in east Jerusalem.

Israel has apologized for the poor timing of the announcement but rejected calls to cancel the project. In Washington this week, Netanyahu reiterated his tough stance, telling a pro-Israel audience that Israel was determined to keep building in all of Jerusalem. The statement was quickly rejected by the U.S.

Netanyahu met with President Barack Obama on Tuesday in an attempt to defuse what has become the countries' worst spat in decades. But the latest announcement, confirmed Wednesday, by Jerusalem city officials threatened to derail any progress. In Washington, Netanyahu spokesman Mark Regev had no comment on the approval for the new building project.

Netanyahu's talks with Obama administration officials were scheduled to continue Wednesday.

The new project threatens to be even more contentious than the earlier one because it is located in Sheikh Jarrah — an Arab neighborhood in the heart of east Jerusalem. Past efforts to move Jewish residents into Arab neighborhoods have often led to protests and even violence.

The project — funded by Jewish American millionaire Irving Moskowitz, a longtime patron of Jewish settler groups — calls for tearing down part of an old hotel, the Shepherd, and building 20 apartments and a three-level underground parking lot instead.

Word of the approval was leaked to an Israeli Web site minutes before Netanyahu met with Obama at the White House on Tuesday.

Netanyahu, who has demanded that he be personally informed about any east Jerusalem

construction projects before they are approved, was caught off guard by the announcement, according to a top aide, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the matter with the press.

It was unclear whether the issue came up in the White House meetings.

Peace Now, an Israeli anti-settlement watchdog, discovered the latest building plan.

"It seems that the municipality of Jerusalem has its own policy that might be devastating for the peace process and Netanyahu wasn't clear enough in order to stop them from allowing further provocation in east Jerusalem," said Peace Now spokeswoman Hagit Ofra.

Jerusalem city officials have tried to play down the project as a zoning issue.

Mayor Nir Barkat says he is committed to bettering the city for all residents, but vociferously opposes the notion of sharing sovereignty over the city. He has repeatedly said he will continue to promote housing construction in all parts of the city.

City spokesman Gidi Schmerling said the project was approved last July, and the recent approval was merely a procedural step after developers paid a final fee for some paperwork. He said media reports were blowing the matter out of proportion, saying they were "meant to create a provocation during the prime minister's visit in the U.S." Netanyahu aide Nir Hefez said in a statement that there are no limits to Jerusalem real-estate deals. "Jews and Arabs can freely buy private properties in all parts of Jerusalem, and they do," he said, adding that approval of the Shepherd Hotel project came last year, and there was nothing new now.

At the time of the approval last July, the U.S. demanded that Israel suspend the project and even summoned Israel's ambassador to Washington over the issue. Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat condemned the plan, and said it damaged Israel's credibility as a peace partner.

Car bomb kills six in Colombian port

LUISA FERNANDA CUELLAR

Associated Press Writer

BOGOTA (AP) — A car bomb exploded in the administrative center of Colombia's Pacific port of Buenaventura on Wednesday, killing six people and wounding more than 30, authorities said. Buenaventura is a key cocaine trafficking center that is rife with rival criminal bands from the right and left.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but armed forces chief Gen. Freddy Padilla said he suspected Colombia's main leftist rebel group.

"It seems it was a car that was abandoned during the night and there are six dead, 32 injured, some of them with minor injuries," said Valle del Cauca provincial Gov. Juan Carlos Abadia.

Outgoing President Alvaro Uribe has put the rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia on the defensive since taking office in 2002.

But the group known as the FARC remains capable of damaging attacks and in recent months it has stepped up raids on military posts in Valle del Cauca in particular. Authorities say it is



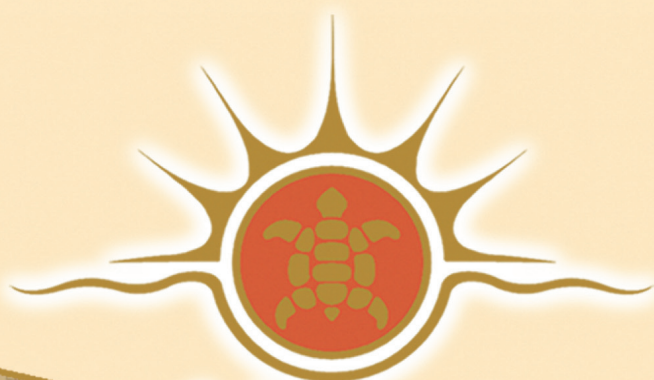
A soldier inspects the scene of a car bomb attack in Buenaventura, Colombia, Wednesday, March 24, 2010. A car bomb exploded in the administrative center of Colombia's Pacific port of Buenaventura, killing six people and wounding more than 30, authorities said.

Associated Press

involved in the cocaine and marijuana trade in the region.

Gov. Abadia said that the area also has suffered violence from drug traffickers and right-wing paramilitaries.

Wednesday's car-bombing was the most serious in Colombia since a September 2008 blast killed four people in front of the palace of justice in Cali, capital of Valle de Cauca province. □



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Runaway train cars crash in Norway, three dead

IAN MacDOUGALL

Associated Press Writer

OSLO (AP) — Sixteen runaway train cars careened downhill for three miles (five kilometers) and crashed into a port building Wednesday, killing three workers, before two of the cars plunged into the water. The empty train cars broke loose from a cargo train and slammed into the port terminal on the edge of the Oslo fjord, destroying the building, police and railroad officials said. The victims had been working in or around the terminal, police spokeswoman Martine Laeng said. A worker initially reported missing was later confirmed as one of three casualties; three people were reported injured.

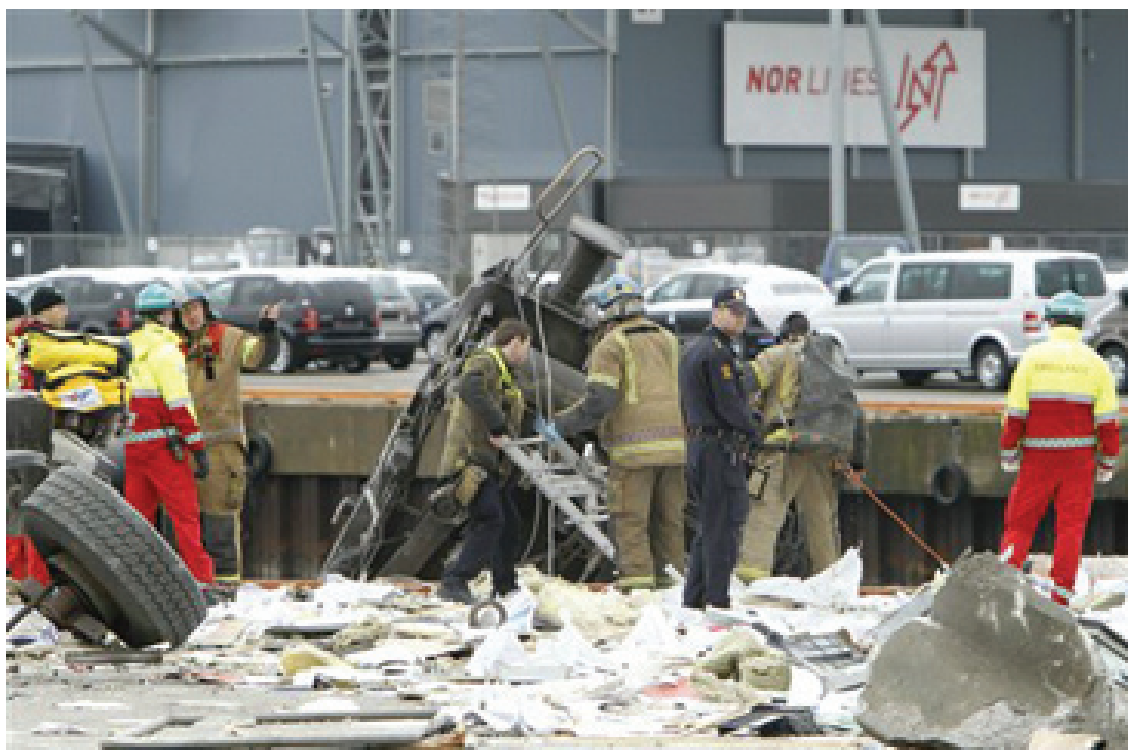
It was not immediately clear how the train cars became detached. Authorities said they started rolling from a rail yard in eastern Oslo and accelerated as they moved toward the industrial port, about three miles down the tracks. Vegar Halveg, who

works for a transport company at the port in the Sjursoeya district of Oslo, said he heard a loud screech and looked out the window to see several empty cargo train cars speed past. "They were going much faster than they usually do, so we realized something was wrong," Halveg told The Associated Press, estimating their speed at more than 62 miles per hour. "The last car was practically airborne."

Halveg said several cars derailed and one hit a dump truck. The driver was injured but conscious when rescue workers put him into an ambulance, he said.

Port worker Morten Schroeder told national broadcaster NRK the runaway train cars appeared "without any kind of warning whatsoever," despite the long distance they traveled before reaching the port.

Nine of the rail cars appeared to have derailed before the line ended, taking out cars and trucks. The rest smashed through a barrier at the end of



Emergency personnel attend the scene after an out-of-control freight train slammed into a building in an industrial area in Oslo Wednesday March 24, 2010.

the track before tearing into an administrative building. Two of them crashed through the building and fell into the fjord, police said.

Johan Fredriksen, chief of staff for Oslo police, said police were interviewing workers

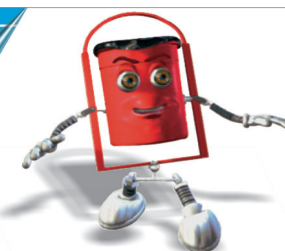
both at the port and at the rail yard to determine what caused the accident. He said there was no immediate suspicion of wrongdoing or negligence. Fredriksen said the scene was secure and that there was no risk of explosions or a fire.

Associated Press

He said it wasn't immediately clear what kind of warning — if any — had been sent in advance of the crash. He said police received the first emergency call at about the same time the train cars entered the port area. □

Aruba TODAY

KEEP ARUBA CLEAN...



THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION



Hollywood actress Whoopi Goldberg is pictured at a fundraiser for Haiti in New York City in February 2010. Goldberg will be the guest of honour at Vienna's glitzy AIDS charity Life Ball on July 17, organiser Gery Keszler announced.

(AFP/Getty Images/File/Larry Busacca)

Whoopi Goldberg star guest at AIDS charity Life Ball

VIENNA (AFP) – Hollywood actress Whoopi Goldberg will be the guest of honour at Vienna's glitzy AIDS charity Life Ball on July 17, organiser Gery Keszler announced Wednesday.

The fashion-show-cum-party-event celebrates this year its 18th anniversary and has the honour of opening the World AIDS conference which will be held in the Austrian capital from July 18-23.

"I've admired (Goldberg) for years for her openness, her coolness and her humour," Keszler told journalists Wednesday.

The US comedian follows a glamorous list of stars who have graced the red-ribbon catwalk at Vienna's gothic city hall in recent years, from actresses Sharon Stone and Eva Longoria-Parker to model Linda Evangelista and singers Elton John and Anastacia.

Former US president Bill Clinton, whose foundation promotes AIDS work, will also take part in the charity event, Keszler said.

Last year, the Life Ball raised close to 1.5 million euros (two million dollars), which are each year distributed to various projects to combat the disease and help its victims. □

Review: 'Hot Tub Time Machine' is lukewarm soak

By DAVID GERMAIN,
AP Movie Writer

If you had a hot tub that could transport you to any era in time, would you really make a beeline for the 1980s?

That's where the filmmakers headed with "Hot Tub Time Machine," a not-so-excellent, dude-where's-my-youth adventure that's occasionally amusing but mostly is as lazy, self-involved and garish as that chintzy decade itself.

The '80s make an easy target, and casting John Cusack, one of the most enduring stars to rise from that decade, adds to the flashback and lends some assurance that you're not forking money over for a hot tub and getting a rusty, leaky old claw foot tub instead. If this guy signed on, it can't be as dumb as it sounds, right?

Well, "Hot Tub Time Machine" pretty much is as dumb as it sounds, its goofy but potentially clever concept landing closer to the moronic monotony of "Dude, Where's My Car?" than the inspired idiocy of "Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure."

Some of the trouble arises from Cusack's castmates in this tale of four losers who travel back to 1986 to settle old scores and do a little messing with the timeline for personal profit.

Cusack is fine, wandering the action like a manic Scrooge who has come back to see how he squandered his early



In this film publicity image released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, from left, Craig Robinson, Rob Corddry, John Cusack and Clark Duke are shown in a scene from, 'Hot Tub Time Machine.'

(AP Photo/Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Rob McEwan)

promise with bad choices. As one of his buddies, Craig Robinson captures the same droll charm he brings as the warehouse foreman on "The Office."

But much of the story hinges on character actors Rob Corddry and Clark Duke, who overdo everything with a shrillness that makes the movie's crass jokes and gags all the more obnoxious — and a lot less funny than they might have been.

The thin plot centers on three middle-aged buddies grown apart: insurance salesman Adam (Cusack), whose girlfriend just left him; party guy Lou (Corddry), who has no friends, no job and no prospects; and hen-pecked married man Nick (Robinson), who gave up his music dream and now works in a chic

canine-care shop.

With Adam's video-game geek nephew Jacob (Duke) along for the ride, these three take a weekend trip to the ski resort that was the scene of their best times in the '80s.

One drunken night, and presto, Mr. Hot Tub Time Machine sends them back to a pivotal night of their youth for a chance to either let time play out the same sad grooves or use their knowledge of the future to create a better past for themselves.

Lizzy Caplan, Collette Wolfe and Lyndsy Fonseca unremarkably round out the cast as some of the women in their lives. Chevy Chase bizarrely turns up as a mysterious hot tub repairman, his fleeting scenes so pointless and forgettable they beg the question, was this really one of

the biggest stars of the '80s? Crispin Glover, who co-starred in 1985's time-travel adventure "Back to the Future," continually takes over the movie with his weirdly amiable turn as a bellhop who has his own dark fate hanging over him.

Cusack and production partner Grace Loh are producers on "Hot Tub Time Machine," and they brought in Cusack's old high school pal and longtime creative collaborator Steve Pink to direct. Three screenwriters — Josh Heald and writing partners Sean Anders and John Morris — teamed up on the script, which has flashes of humor and a couple of truly hilarious moments.

But the story rests too often on easy '80s potshots — Look, a Jheri curl! Check out those leg-warmers! Can you hear me on my brick cell phone? — and today's parlance falling on deaf '80s ears — E-mail? What's that?

Some chuckles arise out of the soundtrack stuffed with '80s tunes, among them Spandau Ballet's "True," Cutting Crew's "(I Just) Died in Your Arms" and Robinson's cover of Rick Springfield's "Jessie's Girl."

The silly title, the Cusack-1980s connection, the goodhearted spoof of a decade that still brings back a wince of embarrassment for many who lived through it. □



FILE - In this Oct. 5, 2006 file photo, Amish buggies travel in a procession in Bart, Pa., during the first of four funerals planned for the day. The authors of a book about the mass shooting at a Pennsylvania Amish school are distancing themselves from a movie adaptation that's set to air on the Lifetime Movie Network.

(AP Photo/Mel Evans, File)

TV movie on Amish school shooting draws criticism

LANCASTER, Pa. – The authors of a book about the mass shooting at an Amish school in Pennsylvania are distancing themselves from a movie adaptation airing on the Lifetime Movie Network.

The authors of "Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy," say they declined to work with the producers of a similarly named movie out of respect for the community affected by the shooting in Nickel Mines.

Five girls died and five others were badly wounded when Charles Carl Roberts IV barricaded himself inside the West Nickel Mines Amish School and opened fire in October 2006.

Elizabethtown College professor Donald B. Kraybill and two co-authors say their publisher, Jossey-Bass, sold the film rights to the book. They say they'll donate their proceeds to charity.

"Amish Grace" is airing Sunday. □

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY



FILE - In this Jan. 19, 2010, file photo, a branch office of Bank of America is shown in New York. Bank of America is taking a major step to help some of its most troubled mortgage borrowers. The bank said Wednesday, March 24, 2010, it will forgive up to 30 percent of some customers' loan principal.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, file)

BofA to start reducing mortgage principal

By IEVA M. AUGSTUMS,
AP Business Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. - Bank of America Corp. is giving some of its most troubled mortgage borrowers relief from the threat of foreclosure.

The bank, the largest mortgage servicer in the country, said Wednesday it will forgive up to 30 percent of some customers' total mortgage balance. The homeowners must be at least 60 days delinquent on their loans and owe more than 120 percent of their homes' value.

The plan is part of an agreement the Charlotte, N.C.-based bank reached 18 months ago with state attorneys general to settle charges over high-risk loans made by Countrywide Financial Corp. The loans were made before Bank of America acquired the mortgage lender in mid-2008. Bank of America has since stopped making those loans.

Although the motivation for Bank of America's announcement was to resolve legal problems, it has the potential of setting a precedent for other banks to also start forgiving principal on loans that are in danger of failing. Bank of America is the nation's largest bank, and it's among the first to take a systematic approach to reducing mortgage principal when home values drop well below the amount owed.

Millions of homes have gone into foreclosure since the housing market collapsed in late 2007. The loans affected by Bank of America's announcement include certain subprime and option adjustable rate mortgages. Option ARMs allow borrowers to start with minimal monthly payments that actually increase the loan's balance.

The borrowers who can take advantage of the Bank of America program must also qualify for the Obama administration's \$75 billion mortgage loan modification program.

Bank of America estimates that about 45,000 customers will qualify for its plan. The offer will cut total reduced principal by about \$3 billion. That could lower the bank's earnings, which have already been hurt by consumers' continuing defaults on mortgage and credit card loans. □

Stocks fall after agency cuts Portugal debt rating

By STEPHEN BERNARD
and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK - Stocks fell from their 2010 highs Wednesday on renewed concerns about European debt problems and weakness in the housing market.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell about 45 points in afternoon trading. Broader stock indexes also slid.

Treasury prices tumbled after a government debt auction drew only modest demand for a second straight day. That stirred concern that the government will have to pay more to attract buyers for its debt. Washington has been issuing record amounts of debt to help revive the economy.

The drop in stocks comes after Fitch Ratings lowered Portugal's credit rating. The rating agency said the country's recovery will be slower than other countries that use the euro. Fitch contends that could hurt Portugal's ability to repay its debt.

Debt problems in Europe have been one of the few drags on stocks in recent months. Rising debt in Greece, Portugal and other nations that use the euro have investors worried the countries will struggle to rebound economically and upend a global recovery.

The dollar rose sharply against the euro and other major currencies. The dollar is at its highest level against the euro since May. The stronger dollar makes commodities more expensive to foreign buyers. That cuts into demand.

Stocks have been carving steady gains for more than a month as economic reports signal slow improvement in the economy. That has kept cautious traders from placing big bets on a rebound.



In this March 23, 2010 photo, Robert Arciero of Cuttone & Company works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, in New York.

(AP Photo/Henny Ray Abrams)

Some analysts were already expecting a retreat now that major stock indexes are at their highest level in about 18 months. Subodh Kumar, global investment strategist at Subodh Kumar & Assoc. in Toronto, said investors have been too quick to look past risks still facing the economy such as debt problems in Portugal.

"There are quantitative issues that the markets have been ignoring," he said. "I believe that markets are somewhat extended."

In midafternoon trading, the Dow fell 44.21, or 0.4 percent, to 10,844.62, a day after closing at its highest level since September 2008.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index dropped 6.14, or 0.5 percent, to 1,168.03, while the Nasdaq composite index fell 14.27, or 0.6 percent, to 2,400.97. Bond prices dropped after an auction of \$42 billion in five-year Treasury notes drew weak demand. The yield on the five-year note, which moves opposite price, rose to 2.56 percent from 2.42 percent. The yield on the benchmark 10-year note rose to 3.81 percent from 3.69 percent late Tuesday. An

auction Tuesday of \$44 billion in two-year notes also saw a drop in demand. A Commerce Department report on new home sales showed the market is continuing to contract. Sales unexpectedly fell to the lowest level on record in February as bad winter weather kept buyers out of the market.

New home sales fell 2.2 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual sales pace of 308,000. Economists polled by Thomson Reuters had forecast sales would rise to 320,000.

The report comes a day after the National Association of Realtors said a drop in sales of existing homes wasn't as bad as forecast last month.

A recovery in housing has been uneven. Reports that beat even modest expectations have regularly been met with buying on Wall Street, such as Tuesday's big gains. The Dow jumped nearly 103 points, or 1 percent. It has advanced in 10 of the past 11 days.

Investors brushed off a report on orders to factories for big-ticket manufactured goods that showed continued growth. Unlike the housing market, the manufacturing industry has shown steady improvement in recent months. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Changes at Bay Hill, starting with no Tiger



Arnold Palmer, left, walks down the first fairway with Tom Ridge, former Homeland Security director, during the Pro-Am round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at Bay Hill in Orlando, Fla., Wednesday, March 24, 2010.

Associated Press

DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Never have there been so many changes in one year at Bay Hill for the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

Palmer had the entire crew from his design company revamp all the greens, replacing the sand base 18 inches deep, changes the strain of grass and altering the contours to allow for more hole locations.

The tee boxes were upgraded, and one was moved. The tournament tee for the 15th hole is now located on the other side of Bay Hill Boulevard. It measures 467 yards, eliminating the chance to cut the corner of the dogleg.

The scorecard certainly is different. After experimenting as a par 70 the last three years, Palmer thought it was better for Bay Hill to return as a par 72, restoring the fourth and

16th holes to par 5s to create more excitement at the end of the round.

“It’s not as quirky,” Stephen Ames said. “The changes are great. It’s more playable for everybody, not just the big hitters.”

All that work to the course, and the biggest change at Bay Hill is the field.

The defending champion is not here.

No one has won at Bay Hill more than Tiger Woods, who knocked in birdie putts on the 72nd hole each of the last two years for dramatic victories. Woods also won four straight times at the Arnold Palmer Invitational from 2000 through 2003.

And when the world’s No. 1 player began practicing at nearby Isleworth this month, speculation picked up that he would return from the sex scandal that has dogged him

since Thanksgiving at a course he knows better than most.

That was until Palmer received a phone call last week.

“He called me one evening and we had a conversation,” Palmer said. “And the situation was that he didn’t feel his game was sharp enough to come and compete that soon, so he told me that he was not going to play. He would go to Augusta first.”

Palmer said he was “disappointed,” although it was hard to gauge just how much.

For Woods to make his return at Bay Hill could have been a logistical nightmare, especially on a course in a residential neighborhood that is not gated, with several holes lined with homes where people routinely gather in the backyard to watch golfers go by.

Continued on Page 15

Australians Meares, Meyer win at track cycling worlds

RICHARD STEED

Associated Press Writer

BALLERUP, Denmark (AP) — Australia collected the first gold medals of the track cycling world championships Wednesday with Anna Meares winning the women’s 500-meter time trial and Cameron Meyer defending his title in the men’s points race.

U.S. rider Sarah Hammer won the women’s individual pursuit and Germany outpaced defending champion France in the men’s team sprint.

The German trio of Robert Forstemann, Maximilian Levy and Stefan Nimke finished in 43.433 seconds, beating the French by a whisper. Favorite Britain had to settle for bronze after failing to qualify for the final in the first upset of the championships. The result shattered Briton Chris Hoy’s hopes of repeating his triple gold performance from the

Beijing Olympics. “I want to win every race. So entering three races I am thinking three golds. But it shows tonight how tough it is out there and that we don’t just turn up to pick up our gold medals,” Hoy told The Associated Press after the race. “Every color of medal is hard fought for and I am incredibly proud of our bronze medal tonight.”

Meares clocked 33.381 seconds to win the time trial ahead of last year’s world champion Simona Krupeckaite of Lithuania. Olga Panarina of Belarus got the bronze medal with a time of 33.779.

Britain’s Victoria Pendleton, who won the bronze at last year’s event, decided not to compete and is concentrating on three other events — sprint, team sprint and keirin.

Meyer was outstanding in the men’s points race. The reigning world champion got 70 points, well ahead of Dutchman



Anna Meares of Australia in action during the Women’s 500 meter time trial event at the World Track Cycling Championships in the Ballerup Arena, Copenhagen, Denmark, Wednesday, March, 24, 2010.

Associated Press

Peter Schep with 33. Bronze medalist Milan Kadlec from the Czech Republic had 27 points. Greek rider Ioannis Tamouridis crashed on the sixth lap of the sprint and was

carried off on a stretcher with a suspected broken shoulder. The men’s point race has a distance of 160 laps with 16 sprints. In the women’s pursuit, Hammer easily beat Britain’s

Wendy Houvenaghel while Lithuania’s Vilija Sereikaite defeated last year’s world champion Alison Shanks of New Zealand to grab the bronze. □

NBA Roundup.

Bobcats set win record, beat Wizards 95-86 in OT

WASHINGTON (AP)

— Gerald Wallace had 17 points, 19 rebounds and got two opponents to foul out in overtime to help the Charlotte Bobcats set a club record for victories Tuesday night with a 95-86 win over the Washington Wizards.

The win was No. 36 of the season for Charlotte, one more than the previous high set last season, and moved the team a step closer to the first playoff berth in its history.

The loss moved the Wizards closer to a dubious bit of history. Washington has dropped 12 straight and will equal a club mark if it loses at Indiana on Wednesday. The Wizards haven't won since defeating lowly New Jersey 89-85 on Feb. 28.

At Auburn Hills, Danny Granger scored 32 points as the Indiana Pacers ended a nine-game road losing streak. Detroit was officially eliminated from the playoff race with the loss, ending an eight-year streak of postseason

appearances.

Brandon Rush scored 20 points for Indiana, while Troy Murphy added 10 points and 12 rebounds. Tayshaun Prince led the Pistons with 14.

The Pistons lost starting point guard Will Bynum in the first half with a back bruise, then coach John Kuester was ejected for arguing a call in the third quarter.

At New York, Danilo Gallinari scored 17 of his 28 points during a spirited duel with Carmelo Anthony in the third quarter and Al Harrington added 23 points for the Knicks.

New York climbed out of an early 12-point deficit and took control late in the third period. David Lee finished with 12 points and 16 rebounds.

Anthony scored 36 points and Chauncey Billups had 25 for the Nuggets, who lost their second straight as they try to hold onto the No. 2 spot in the Western Conference playoffs. Their magic number for clinching a postseason spot

remained at three.

The Nuggets had won the last four meetings — Anthony scored a career-high 50 in the last matchup — their longest winning streak ever against the Knicks. They seemed on their way to easily extending that run before the game changed after halftime.

Denver played its eighth game under Adrian Dantley since coach George Karl was diagnosed with throat cancer. Mavericks 106, Clippers 96
At Dallas, Jason Kidd celebrated his 37th birthday by scoring a season-high 26 points, much of it coming during a game-breaking spurt at the start of the fourth quarter.

The Mavericks came in having lost three of four since winning 13 in a row. They looked good in the first half, scoring 62 points, and were in complete control until Dirk Nowitzki was ejected with 9:16 left in the third quarter for complaining about a foul call.



Dallas Mavericks guard Jason Kidd, center, attempts to get by Los Angeles Clippers guards Eric Gordon, left, and Steve Blake, right, as center DeAndre Jordan, rear, looks on in the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, March 23, 2010, in Dallas. Kidd had 12 assists and 26 points in the 106-96 Mavericks win.

Associated Press

Dallas ended up scoring just 14 points in the third quarter, and was down by one going into the fourth.

Then Kidd took over.

He had 13 points, three assists and a steal during a 22-3 run that put the Mavericks ahead for good, on their way

to equaling Denver for the second-best record in the Western Conference.

In other NBA games it was, Charlotte 95, Washington 86, OT; Indiana 98, Detroit 83; New York 109, Denver 104; and Dallas 106, L.A. Clippers 96. □



NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell answers a question from a reporter during a news conference at the end of the NFL meetings in Orlando, Fla., Wednesday, March 24, 2010.

Associated Press

BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — NFL players should be safer during games thanks to several rules changes passed at the league meetings. They also might be playing longer in regular-season overtimes.

The NFL passed rules Wednesday to further protect defenseless players, including ball carriers who lose their helmet during a play. Seven of eight

overall rules proposals were adopted, then several owners said they also expect the modified overtime for the playoffs that passed the previous day to be revisited in May to include the regular season.

"It's a better system, so why not have a better system every game?" Philadelphia Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie said of expanding the new OT rule that allows a team losing the coin toss and allowing a field goal on

the first series to then get a possession.

New York Giants owner John Mara added he expects discussion and possibly a vote on using the new OT system to occur at the owners meetings in Dallas in May. The change was proposed only for the postseason by the competition committee and was passed 28-4 Tuesday.

Commissioner Roger Goodell said the league wants to meet with the players and the networks for some input and further discuss the ramifications of expanding the OT change. "We had a proposal for the postseason, we passed that with the understanding that it'll be discussed for the regular season," he said.

Goodell also mentioned scheduling only intradivision games on the final weekend of the season, and placing many such games in Week 16,

as well. He said at the end of last season he was concerned about teams not playing their regulars after clinching titles and is hopeful such scheduling would help avoid that.

The 2010 schedule will be released in April.

The key rules change for player safety bars a defenseless player from being hit in the head or neck area by an opponent who launches himself and uses his helmet, shoulder or forearm to make contact. Previously, those kind of tackles were banned against

receivers who couldn't protect themselves, but now it will apply to everyone.

"These are very specific to very vulnerable moments in the game," Lurie said. "There's no reason not to protect these players. There's a history of potentially serious injuries in these types of collisions."

NFL rules also will now echo those in college when a player running with the ball loses his helmet. The whistle will blow immediately and the ball will be placed at the "progress spot" where the helmet came off. □



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Chicago Blackhawk goalie Antti Niemi makes a save as Phoenix Coyotes' Martin Hanzal awaits a rebound during the third period of Chicago's 2-0 win in an NHL hockey game in Chicago on Tuesday, March 23, 2010.

Associated Press

NHL Roundup

Blackhawks ends Coyotes' nine-game winning streak

CHICAGO (AP) — Antti Niemi made 28 saves for his sixth shutout as the Chicago Blackhawks took over the points lead in the Western Conference by ending the Phoenix Coyotes' nine-game winning streak with a 2-0 victory Tuesday night.

Chicago moved closer to clinching its second straight playoff berth and now has 99 points, two more than the Coyotes and one more than San Jose, which regained the Pacific Division lead over Phoenix.

Patrick Kane and Marian Hossa scored second-period goals for Chicago, which beat the Coyotes for the first time in four meetings this season. Phoenix' nine-game winning streak had equaled a club record.

At Atlanta, David Krejci scored a goal and assisted on another, Tuukka Rask blanked Atlanta for the second time this season, and the Bruins kept up their dominance over the Thrashers to extend their lead for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

The Bruins moved three points ahead of the Thrashers in the playoff race, snapping Atlanta's four-game winning streak.

Rask stopped a penalty shot and made 28 saves in all to beat Atlanta for the third time this season, including a pair of 4-0 victories.

Devils 6, Blue Jackets 3

At Newark, Travis Zajac and Zach Parise each scored twice and Ilya Kovalchuk had a goal and three assists to lead New Jersey over Columbus.

Paul Martin also scored for the Devils, and Martin Brodeur made 19 saves to reach the 40-win mark for the eighth time. No other NHL goalie has had more than three 40-win seasons.

The Devils jumped over the Penguins and into first place in the Atlantic Division. New Jersey and Pittsburgh both have 90 points, but the Devils have one more win than the Penguins and have played one fewer game.

Antoine Vermette, Jakub Voracek and Kristian Huselius scored for Columbus.

At Toronto, David Booth had the first two-goal game of an injury-marred season. Scott Clemmensen came within three minutes of registering his first shutout of the season. He settled for a 42-save effort in a victory.

Michael Frolik and Jason Garrison also scored for Florida, which became the first visiting team

to leave Toronto with a victory since March 2. Fredrik Sjostrom scored for the Maple Leafs, who received 25 saves from J.S. Giguere. Booth is starting to find his stride after missing 45 games because of a concussion. He seems to be regaining the form that produced 31 goals last season. Booth has four goals in four games.

Toronto entered with wins in six of seven.

At Ottawa, Brian Elliott earned his second shutout in two days and Chris Kelly and Daniel Alfredsson scored to lead Ottawa over Philadelphia.

Elliott stopped 26 shots — including a spectacular glove save on James van Riemsdyk with 3:55 remaining — for his fifth shutout of the season.

Kelly scored midway through the first. Alfredsson put the Senators up by two with his 18th goal 18 seconds into the third.

The Senators strengthened their hold on fifth place overall in the Eastern Conference with 83 points, four ahead of Philadelphia and Montreal.

Flyers left winger Simon Gagne got 19 minutes in penalties in the wake of Alfredsson's goal when he jumped Anton Volchenkov after the Ottawa defenseman checked him into the boards from behind earlier in the play.

At Tampa, Florida, Martin St. Louis scored his second goal of the game 29 seconds into overtime as Tampa Bay stopped a five-game losing streak with a win over Carolina.

Steve Downie also scored for the Lightning, who won for just the third time in 15 games.

At St. Paul, Evgeni Nabokov stopped 18 shots and four San Jose players scored to help the Sharks snap a six-game losing streak.

Joe Pavelski, Dany Heatley, Torrey Mitchell and Joe Thornton all had goals for the Sharks. San Jose won for the first time since beating Nashville on March 11 and snapped its longest skid since Nov. 5-30, 2005. It was also the Sharks' first road win since beating Detroit on Feb. 11.

In other NHL matches it was: Florida 4, Toronto 1; New Jersey 6, Columbus 3; Boston 4, Atlanta 0; Ottawa 2, Philadelphia 0; Tampa Bay 3, Carolina 2, OT; Dallas 3, Nashville 1; San Jose 4, Minnesota 1; Chicago 2, Phoenix 0; Calgary 3, Anaheim 1; and Edmonton 3, Vancouver 2. □

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Henin beats Craybas in first round at Key Biscayne

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP) — Justine Henin advanced to the second round of the Sony Ericsson Open by beating Jill Craybas 6-2, 6-2 on Wednesday.

Henin double-faulted five times Wednesday and struggled with inconsistent

groundstrokes. But she saved seven of eight break points while converting five of six.

The 33rd-ranked Henin, a former No. 1 and seven-time Grand Slam champion, is mounting a comeback this year after a 20-month retirement. She'll play fifth-seeded Elena

Dementieva in the second round Friday.

"I realize it's gonna take a little bit of time to really be in the good rhythm and find myself again on the court, and I have to get used to different kind of things," Henin said.

"I didn't live this life for



Justine Henin, from Belgium, returns the ball to Jill Craybas during their match at the Sony Ericsson Open tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Fla. Wednesday, March 24, 2010.

Associated Press

BAYHILL

Continued from Page 12

Space is limited to the media, although tournament officials had a plan in place.

No worries, now.

It will be another PGA Tour event without Woods, another stronger field that gets overlooked because he's not around.

Ernie Els, coming off his victory two weeks ago at the World Golf Championship in Doral, has returned to Bay Hill for the first time in three years. The Big Easy only has two top 10s at Bay Hill, one of them memorable. In a 36-hole Sunday caused by a rain delay, he spent some 10 hours with Woods and Davis Love III and beat Woods by 10 shots.

Steve Stricker, No. 2 in the world, returns for the first time since 2005, mainly because his daughter's spring break in Wisconsin changed by a week.

Eleven of the 13 winners on the PGA Tour are at the Arnold Palmer Invitational, and that doesn't include Phil Mickelson, who won this tournament in 1997 and seems to challenge every time he plays.

Even so, the talk has been about Woods. More of that has to do with his announcement



Ernie Els, of South Africa, hits a shot from the seventh tee during the Pro-Am round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at Bay Hill in Orlando, Fla., Wednesday, March 24, 2010.

Associated Press

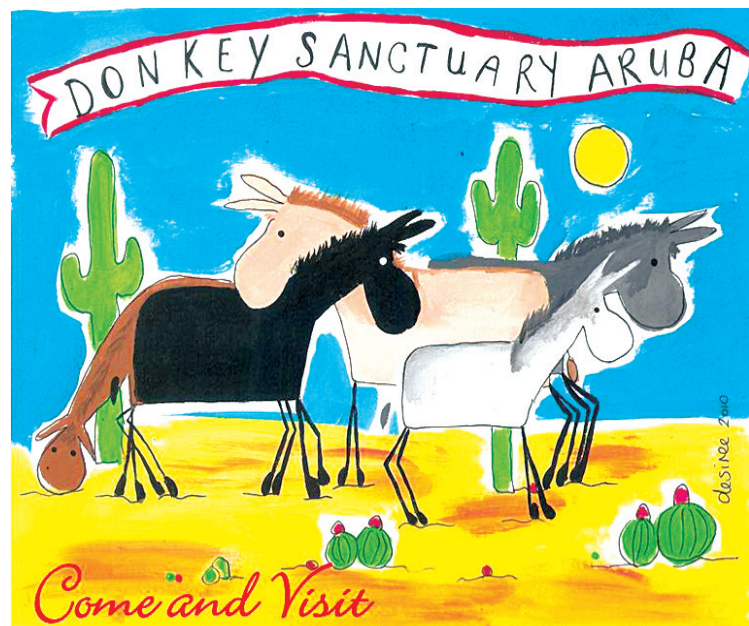
last week that he will return to competition for the first time since the Nov. 27 car accident, which set off revelations of infidelity. His absence also means one less player to beat, and while Woods is a six-time winner, he had five other Bay Hill appearances when he didn't finish inside the top 20. The focus often shifts to the Masters this time of the year no matter what's going on with Woods. Bay Hill always has been part of the critical buildup to the first major of the year.

But with Palmer as the host, and a course the players might find more agreeable, the tournament is getting its equal

share of attention. That's the way Stewart Cink is looking at it.

"I would like to drive the ball really well here and putt really well here and then I can go home saying, 'I can't wait to play in the Masters.' And then I have to wait seven days, and that will probably go away," he said.

"So I just want to play Bay Hill for Bay Hill, and try to have a great finish here, maybe win, and just get myself some confidence going into the Masters." □



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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Major League Soccer set to begin 15th season

TIM BOOTH

AP Sports Writer

Labor strife is resolved, the league's top player and perhaps best team reside near the glitz of Hollywood, a new \$200 million stadium is open in the league's largest market and the 16th franchise is about to debut.

Seems everything is going great for Major League Soccer, right?

Well, not quite everything.

A potentially crippling strike was averted when the players union and owners agreed on a new five-year labor contract last weekend.

But the league begins 2010 with its biggest name, David Beckham, perhaps on the shelf for the entire year because of injury, its second-biggest, Cuauhtemoc Blanco, returning to Mexico, and just two teams that turned a profit a year ago.

The ability of a league entering its 15th season to avoid a work stoppage was crucial to building on the momentum the MLS has gained in recent years. Sparkling debuts in Seattle and Toronto — the only two profitable teams from 2009 — along with a deeper talent pool and some important international signings have boosted the league's profile.

The old collective-bargaining agreement expired on Jan. 31 and talks were at a stalemate earlier this month when George H. Cohen, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, was brought in to help make headway. Players wanted free agency, while owners were steadfastly opposed to anything but the single-entity structure for all contracts the league has used since its inception in 1996.

The owners won out when it came to free agency, but players gained increased rights, better minimum



Los Angeles Galaxy's Landon Donovan moves the ball during soccer practice on Wednesday, March 17, 2010, at The Home Depot Center in Carson, Calif. Donovan returned to the Galaxy after a ten-week loan to England's Everton.

salaries and guaranteed contracts for about 60 percent of the players.

"I don't think you can truly find any situation where a work stoppage is going to be beneficial," Seattle goalkeeper Kasey Keller said. "I can see how it got to a point where there were a couple of points that maybe it could have come down to that on both sides. In this situation both sides recognized that and made the changes that needed to be changed on that."

With labor peace, the league kicks off Thursday night when Seattle hosts expansion Philadelphia. Other games the first week are: Colorado at Chivas USA; Toronto at Columbus; Houston at FC Dallas; Chicago at New York in the regular season debut of Red Bull Arena; D.C. United at Kansas City; league champ Real Salt Lake at San Jose; and New England at Los Angeles.

The Galaxy is the team everyone will be keeping an eye on early in the season. They weren't expected to have Beckham until after the World Cup anyway.

But his torn left Achilles' tendon, suffered while playing for AC Milan, ended his hopes of playing for England in the World Cup and put his return to Los Angeles in question. Beckham's recovery time is expected to be about six months.

"He's sacrificed, I think, more than anybody in the world to have a chance at playing in a World Cup," said Los Angeles teammate Landon Donovan. "When you do that and something like this happens, it's awful."

Donovan was named the league's most valuable player a season ago and returns to Los Angeles after a highly successful loan with Everton in the English Premier League.



AC Milan English soccer star David Beckham leaves the pitch after being injured during the Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Chievo at the San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy, Sunday, March 14, 2010. Beckham hobbled off with an apparent left leg injury in the closing minutes of AC Milan's game with Chievo. Italy's Sky TV reported that Beckham had torn his Achilles' tendon.

Associated Press

Even without Beckham in the midfield, the Galaxy could be the favorite in the extremely deep Western Conference. Philadelphia will be trying to live up to the success of Seattle and Toronto, whose debut seasons redefined the league's expectation for a new franchise. Philadelphia already has its own stadium, the 18,500-seat PPL Park on the banks of the Delaware River that makes its debut in late June. The Union will play eight of its first 10 games on the road until PPL Park is ready.

The Red Bulls make their home in the league's other new stadium. The \$200 million two-deck oval debuted with an exhibition last weekend and league officials immediately proclaimed it the nation's finest soccer-specific stadium.

Now that the nation's largest market has its own soccer gem, putting a winning product on the field would help. The Red

Bulls hope to add a star later this year. Barcelona's Thierry Henry and Real Madrid's Raul Gonzalez often are mentioned as possibilities.

The Red Bulls finished last season with a league-worst five wins and just 21 points. Columbus is likely to be the class of the Eastern Conference again after winning its second consecutive Supporters' Shield in 2009. The Crew's 49 points were one ahead of Los Angeles and Houston, but Columbus was ousted in the first round of the playoffs by Real Salt Lake.

The Crew's loss seemed like a fluky upset.

That was until RSL beat Chicago in the Eastern Conference final and then won a classic MLS Cup championship, beating Los Angeles 5-4 on penalty kicks to win its first title.

RSL should be among the contenders in the West with dynamic young forward Robbie Finley and veteran midfielder Kyle Beckerman, along with the addition of Costa Rican forward Alvaro Saborio on a loan from a Swiss Super League team. Houston was the equal of Los Angeles in 2009, but must find answers in the midfield for the loss of Stuart Holden and Ricardo Clark, who both signed overseas.

Seattle will again be the most hostile place in the league to play with 36,000 expected for every home game, but it may not matter if the Sounders don't find a way to score more goals and take pressure off 40-year-old goalkeeper Kasey Keller.

Chicago could challenge Columbus in the East, but will need to find a playmaker in the front with Blanco returning to Mexico. The Fire hope the addition of Collins John, paired with former Fulham teammate Brian McBride, can make up for Blanco's loss. □

Richard Gere to come to Aruba

Tiara Air, AAA NV main sponsors of the Aruba Film Festival

ORANJESTAD—The Aruban airline Tiara Air converted one of its planes into a flying billboard for the first Aruba Film Festival. The company is one of the main sponsors for the event in June, and showed off the aircraft that now has the information on the film festival. The first Aruba Film Festival is a project by local artist/composer Jonathan Vieira among others, who said he is thrilled Tiara Air will provide the visual promotion for the festival that will bring actors like Richard Gere to the island to launch their movies. Tiara Air Owner/Director Alejandro Muyale said the idea to dress up an aircraft with a giant sticker promoting the event came spontaneously during a meeting with the organizers. The plane is

used for regional flights and therefore will create an excellent opportunity to promote the festival in Colombia, Venezuela and the Netherlands Antilles.

Muyale said Tiara Air transports thousands of passengers each month and the idea of a flying billboard will expose both the company and the festival. In addition, he said he was happy to support the festival as one of the main sponsors.

The company now will focus on providing its staff with all the necessary information on the festival, so they can disperse details to the passengers and help promote the event themselves. Muyale expects the passengers will have questions when they fly an aircraft adorned with a giant



sticker. He said his personnel is also enthusiastic about the venture.

Alejandro Muyale said

additionally that he is convinced the festival will open up the island to a different market, namely that of festivals and events. These will generate a new kind of business on the island that will work well for regional airlines, like Tiara Air.

The company was already approached by others based on the novel idea of putting a sticker on a plane.

The Aruba Airport Authority, Triple A NV, too supports the Aruba Film Festival. According to spokesperson Hendrik Croes, "Triple A has recognized the importance of such a festival and therefore

will support the event as one of the main sponsors as well." This entails the terminals will function as display for visuals, including billboards and posters on the festival. He acknowledged it was Tiara Air that instrumental in showing the valuable marketing potential of the event. "This is a great way to propagate the festival and Aruba, and everyone here will benefit from it."

Both Muyale and Croes emphasized that the best way to promote Aruba is by joining forces and the Aruba Film Festival is an excellent reason to do so. □

In the Palm Beach Plaza

Casa Tua Méditerranée is officially open



PALM BEACH – Owner Victor Nataf in collaboration with his food and décor savvy sons Daveed and Gregory recently opened their newest island restaurant affiliated to Casa Tua Barcelona in Oranjestad and Casa Tua Pizzeria on Palm Beach.

Casa Tua Méditerranée's professional kitchen crew, with food consultant Kiki Valvis, worked tirelessly to present rich and varied mezethes for tastings, a selection of Greek, Spanish and Arab appetizers against the musical backdrop of Angela Croes' flamenco music, also featuring six gorgeous Oriental dancers. Casa Tua Méditerranée offers a contemporary Mediterranean style. The décor by Daveed Nataf features dark wood, straight-lined furniture, on the outdoor wraparound terrace and in the air-conditioned dining room.

Rave reviews about the food, and caring personalized service, make this new place a perfect spot for people who love to live, and love to eat and party! Join tonight! □

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The landscapers were invited on an unexpected outing, and

accompanied by the Executive Committee, on Palm Beach prepared to have a good time. Glenn Farro, Director of Human Resources gave an excellent speech celebrating the department's achievements, acknowledging the landscapers tremendous contributions to the resort's tropical feel before the Hoola

Hoop contest began!

Frans van Vught, Roque Martinez, Michael Arendsz, Diocelina Zambrano, Johnny Matos, Edwin Tromp, Alphonse Charles and Jean Alexis all received a token of appreciation and Hendrick Webb was named Outstanding Landscaper.

This Sunday @ MooMba Beach!

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HADICURARI - The 3rd Beach Tennis event of the year will take place at Moomba beach bar due to campemento, normally it's held at Eagle Beach.

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11am Start of adult tournament, finals at 5 pm. Adults have to register online!

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More Antilleans, Arubans migrate to the Netherlands

THE HAGUE--The number of Antilleans and Arubans migrating to the Netherlands in 2009 increased compared to previous years. But for the first time in years there was also an increase in the number of Antilleans and Arubans who went back to their island. The number of Antilleans and Arubans taking up residency in the Netherlands in 2009 was 4,095, almost 10 per cent more than in 2008. A total of 2,637 Antilleans and Arubans migrated to the islands in 2009, which is an increase of more than 15 per cent compared to 2008. The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics published the figures on Tuesday. The figures concern migrants who were born in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. The majority hail from Curaçao. Strikingly, the economic crisis in the Netherlands, with increasing unemployment and rising negative public perception of foreigners, didn't deter Antilleans and Arubans from migrating. The increased emigration to the Netherlands since 2006, in any case, hasn't been reversed. Following the exodus in 2000, when 9,977 persons, mostly from Curaçao, moved to the Netherlands, the number of emigrants decreased to 2,257 in 2005. From 2006 onwards, the figures show an increasing trend: 2,981 in 2007, followed by 3,636 in 2008 and 4,095 in 2009.

The number of Antilleans and Arubans returning to the Caribbean was at an all-time low in 2000, at 1,684. This figure increased again to 3,746 in 2004. After that, the numbers decreased again: 3,460 in 2005, followed by 2,818 in 2006, 2,319 in 2007 and 2,191 in 2008. The number of Antilleans returning home in 2009 increased once more to 2,637. □

Parliamentarians approve declaration for risk reduction and climate change adaptation

Meeting in Argentina at the 13th Meeting of the Environmental Commission last week, the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO) approved the 'Buenos Aires Declaration.' The latter emphasizes that, due to the region's high vulnerability to natural hazards, prevention and risk mitigation should be a priority. It stresses that concrete measures for the mitigation of risk and adaptation to climate change should be integrated in national development and sectoral plans.

The declaration goes on to emphasize the need for adequate financial resources for climate change adaptation, in particular for the most vulnerable of the Latin American countries, with the aim of contributing substantially to the next



meetings of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EUROLAT), the United Nations Millennium Development Goals meeting

and finally the UN Climate Change meeting (COP16) to be held in Mexico later this year. The declaration was attended by parliamentarians from

Aruba, Antilles, Netherlands Antilles, Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and, Uruguay. □

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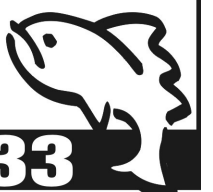
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Kids Easter Celebration at Paseo Herencia Mall



NOORD - On Saturday, April 3rd, Paseo Herencia Shopping & Entertainment Center will host a Kids Easter Celebration. The event will start at 5.00pm with a clown show, various

games with fabulous prizes and a dance performance for the kids. Also there will be dino jump, face painting, cotton candy and popcorn for the kids and the opportunity to

take a picture with the Easter bunny.

To participate in this event parents can sign up their kids at the parking cashier of Paseo Herencia Shopping & Entertainment Center.

Inscription dates are Wednesday, March 24 – Monday, March 29 Price per child is Afl 25,- or \$14.50 and includes a t-shirt, basket with Easter eggs, french fries and juice by Taste of Belgium Bistro and a bag of cookies by Suzy's Cookies.

Stores at Paseo Herencia Shopping & Entertainment Center are open Monday till Saturday from 10am-10pm and on Sunday from 5pm-10pm. □



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Commerce and public feel the absence the giant crane at the Aruba port

Imports come to a halt on Aruba

Parties agree on temporary solution for safe unloading of containers here

ORANJESTAD—Aruba's commerce and even food supply are currently under pressure now that the only giant crane to unload containers from ships is damaged. The Aruba Trade and Industry Association ATIA sounded off the alarm bell when employees of the company responsible for unloading the containers refused to do so, arguing that the crane forms a great danger. ATIA expressed outrage as this meant major losses for the Aruba business community. Particularly food items were lost and ATIA at first demanded compensation. The public is also affected, as many supermarket shelves were quite empty over the last couple of days.

This week the Minister in charge, Mike de Meza met with all parties, including the Aruba Ports Authority, ATIA representatives and port workers, to inform of rapid decisions taken. Decisions that will change the situation at the port drastically, the Minister said.

One of the decisions is that the giant crane will not be used anymore.

The parties agreed there are other ways to

unload containers from ships, for instance by using mobile cranes. These are already on the island and are already proven to be useful. The Aruba Ports Authority will temporarily lease one or more mobile cranes, while making the preparation to purchase a new, permanent giant crane. The old one has been in use for almost 30 years.

The parties also reached an agreement on what steps need to be taken to secure a safe environment at the ports, without affecting the work load. One temporary step is to make a request to the transport

companies, such as Seatrade, to use different ships when bringing containers to Aruba, particularly ships that have their own crane which will facilitate the unloading here. Up till now, companies ship the containers to Curaçao, and from there the containers for Aruba are sent with smaller ships that do not have such instrument onboard.

Aruba for years has tried to convince the shipping companies that this route is not only longer, it is also more expensive.

George: Pressure on for little St. Maarten

PHILIPSBURG--Amidst the now-waning global economic crisis, countries such as the Netherlands and Germany have presented budgets for 2010 with large deficits, but little St. Maarten is forced to present a budget based on international rules, National Alliance (NA) Councilman George Pantophlet said Monday. Pantophlet said that after years of financial mismanagement in St. Maarten, the Netherlands

had forced restrictions on the Island Territory. "What a democracy."

The councilman in Monday's Budget Debate commended the Executive Council, in particular Finance Commissioner Xavier Blackman, for presenting a budget under the most difficult and strict financial controls. "Thanks for a tremendous effort."

The budget, totalling Naf. 323.6 million, is balanced.

Opposition Democratic Party

(DP) has questioned how realistic the budget is, or if it is only balanced on paper. Pantophlet said, "God forbid there is a hurricane or an earthquake on St. Maarten, because then we would see how realistic the budget is." His standpoint is that the budget is simply an estimate of Government's earnings and expenditures, and anything, natural disasters included, will affect it. □



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HUMAN HINTS

Shaping The Fabric of SpaceTime - Zero Point Energy

There are many sound scientific theories that physicists choose to ignore in order to make their science cleaner and more tidy. Instead of expanding science by pursuing new ideas, they pretend that certain phenomena don't exist. A proven theory should not be shunned and ignored in the name of simplicity.

The existence of Zero Point Energy, for example, is not contested in scientific circles, yet scientists generally ignore it in the mathematical equations that describe three dimensional reality. Zero Point Energy does not fit into linear equations, but when Quantum Mechanical math is used, it ties in beautifully, with elegance, harmony and grace.

It has been shown that all Space is made up of randomly fluctuating energy, the Zero Point Energy, and that it can be influenced by electric charge.

It is thought that electrical charges from beyond three dimensions enter the Zero Point Energy and manipulate it into three dimensional form before then retreating back into higher dimensions. Sounds a lot like our Spirit interacting with the physical through our body. This is a dynamic system that is constantly changing. Huge differences in three dimensions can come about from the smallest of alterations to the zero point energy.

It has been proven mathematically that the zero point energy and three dimensional matter mutually interact. They actively affect each other in real time. The zero point energy is what our spirit uses to create our three dimensional hologram. The electromagnetic body that surrounds the physical body purposefully shapes the zero point energy into the form of the hologram of our three

dimensional lives.

The Human Being organizes and shapes zero point energy to create the three dimensional hologram. The three dimensional form that we create is based on our thoughts, emotions, reactions and limitations that we must accept as we progress through physical life.

The electromagnetic body creates fields that form matter from random energy in space. Just like a sculptor with clay, our electromagnetic body shapes three dimensional form from the zero point energy.

What controls what the electromagnetic body forms? What inspiration guides the sculptor of our lives? As always, the answer lies within you. Your true thoughts and emotions about your self define the hologram created by your electromagnetic body. Change your thoughts about

yourself and you will change the very foundation of your life.

We are all immersed within the Zero Point Energy, and it offers each of us the power of infinite creation. When we become aware of how we interact with the substance of three dimensions, we can focus on the interaction, and empower ourselves to create any life we want.

In your meditation, imagine your electromagnetic body transforming the Zero Point Energy in which we are all immersed. Feel your energy shape the Zero Point Energy into whatever you want. Zero Point Energy can be molded into an object, an emotion and anything else that represents what you want to create.

Until Tomorrow...

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~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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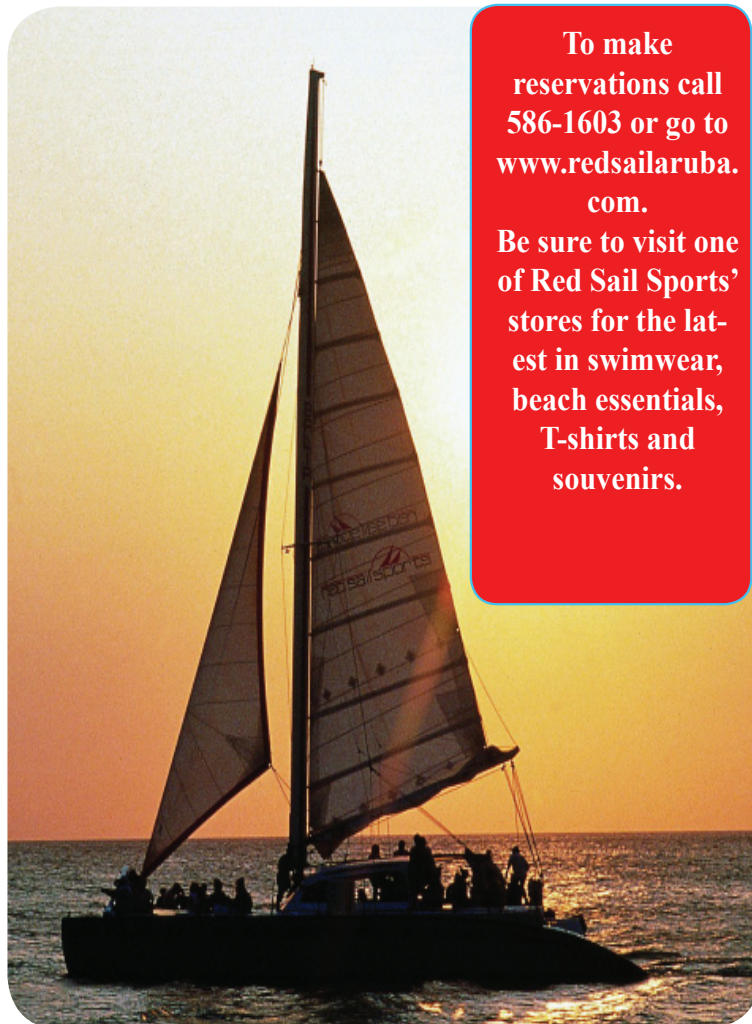
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The authentic local seafood restaurant.

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Kimerley and Louis tie the knot in paradise



EAGLE- On March 16, 2010 while the sun gently kissed the sands and dipped below the horizon of the Aruban coastline, Kimerley R. Elias and Louis R. Geller were married on Eagle Beach. The ceremony was officiated by Reverend Jacobs and witnessed by 34 family members and friends beside the famous Fofoti Trees of the Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort. Kimberley & Louis exchanged vows and poured the symbolic mixing of sand which began their life's



journey together. The couple first met in a local hometown favorite restaurant, Primanti Bros. When something is meant to be, you

simply know it, and six months later Rege proposed while on a visit to Mt. Washington in Pennsylvania, USA. The couple remarked that the ceremony was everything they could have wished for and extends a special thank you to their Aruban wedding planner Lissy Lampe of Ceremonies & Celebrations in Aruba and their photographer from Bella Aruba Productions, Angela Munzenhofer. The wedding reception immediately followed at Cafe Restaurant Bingo with a wonderful dinner. □

Photos by Angela Munzenhofer



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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live!

theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage. In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

then the sections are taken away, one by one, until the girl vanishes completely... right before your eyes!

Then as if that isn't enough to run to your local optometrist, he re-assembles the box for the magicbabe to make a triumphant reappearance. It's an all new original illusion not seen anywhere else in the world.

I went back to see the show during rehearsals, and still couldn't figure out the secret.

Tourists and local fans will remember Steinfeld for past performances, in Aruba,



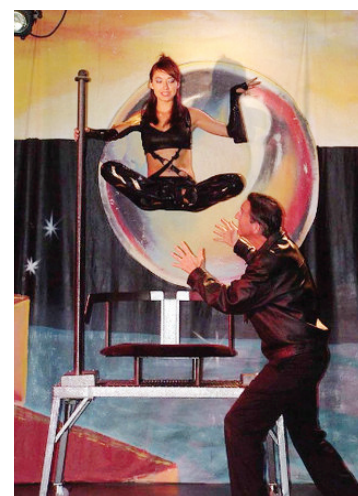
and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new

England mystery writer Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film.

The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. Irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach,

Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX OFFICE tickets are located in main lobby. Purchase TICKETS AT THE DOOR.

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Where: Westin - Aruba, Palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
ShowTime: 9:00 pm, nightly, (7 days a week) theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door, MagicLive box office (hotel lobby), or Westin-aruba concierges desk
Box office opens at 7:30pm nightly
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.95 adults

The truth about carbs and weight gain



By Marie Oser

In recent years, many diet books have blamed plant foods, which are high in carbohydrates for the obesity crisis. But health care professionals have advised against low-carbohydrate diets for a long time.

A low-carb diet tends to be heavy in animal products -- this requires the production of an extra ton and a half of greenhouse gases compared to a plant-based diet.¹ A diet rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruit, and legumes is both environmentally responsible and can help maintain a healthy weight.

Low-carb diet linked to obesity

A recent study in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association found that consuming a low-

carbohydrate diet (less than 47 percent of calories from carbohydrates) is associated with a greater likelihood of being overweight or obese.² This July 2009 study found that the lowest risk may be in consuming a diet with 47 to 64 percent of calories from carbohydrates. This was not the first study with these findings.

According to a Northwestern University study, the thinnest people on Earth are those who eat the most carbohydrates. The study of more than 4,000 men and women 40 to 59 years of age from the U.S, Great Britain, Japan, and China found that people who ate a high carbohydrate diet were much thinner than their high-protein, low-carbohydrate eating counterparts.³

If Atkins diet enthusiasts think that is a stunning

conclusion, the researchers also found that people who eat the most protein are actually the heaviest.

Even more notable, the more animal protein consumed, the higher the person's weight and the greater risk to his or her health. According to study leader Linda Van Horn: "Without exception, a high-complex-carbohydrate, high-vegetable-protein diet is associated with low body mass. High-protein diets were associated with higher body weight."

Research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association affirmed that a low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet does not cause weight gain. Researchers found that women following a diet low in fat and high in fruits, vegetables, and grains actually lost weight. The study, the Women's Health Initiative Dietary Modification Trial, followed close to 50,000 post-menopausal women for more than 7 years.⁴

Eat complex carbs for good health

There are two classes of carbohydrates, simple and complex. Refined grains produce unnatural and inferior products and have

been robbed of important vitamins, minerals and fiber. Whole grains are generally brown or tan and refined products are universally white as in white bread, white rice, white sugar and white flour. Products such as these contain simple carbohydrates and should be avoided.

Carbohydrates are an important part of a healthy diet, however one should always choose whole grain foods, which contain complex carbohydrates.

Complex carbohydrates take longer to break down and the slow absorption of sugars provides the body with a steady supply of energy and also limits the amount of sugar that is converted into fat and stored.

Ounce for ounce, carbohydrates have fewer calories than either fat or alcohol, and eating carbs does not lead to weight gain, unless, as with any food group, they are eaten to excess. □

The dark side of bacon



By Lori Bongiorno

Even the most ardent bacon lovers will admit that that dealing with leftover bacon grease is no fun.

What should you do with it? Let's start with what you should NEVER do: Pour it down the drain.

Even the tiniest amounts of bacon grease or cooking oil can clog up your pipes and ultimately back up sewer systems. Rinsing with a lot of hot water as you pour it down the drain won't help. Once that grease cools down, it solidifies and sticks to pipes.

Luckily there are plenty of suggestions for how to responsibly dispose, reuse, and even recycle your leftover cooking oil.

Absorb small amounts of grease with shredded paper, used kitty litter, or other absorbent materials and then throw it in the trash.

Pour oil in a metal container (coffee cans are a popular option). You can throw it out once it solidifies.

Some people save bacon grease or used cooking oil to reuse for cooking. If you choose to do that, you might want to strain it first and store it in the fridge. Again, a coffee can comes in handy.

A growing number of communities are offering residents the ability to recycle their cooking oil. Search Earth 911 for local options. □



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Executive Councils pledge to combat juvenile delinquency

MARIGOT--The Executive Councils of Dutch St. Maarten and French St. Martin have agreed to form a joint technical committee to address the problems of juvenile delinquency and youth crime that continue to blight both sides of the island.

The decision was taken at a meeting between the two councils held in the Hotel de la Collectivité on Tuesday.

The initiative to bring the two governing administrations to the table to address the issue in the two-hour meeting was taken by President Frantz Gumbs, who said he wanted to commemorate the 362nd anniversary of the Treaty of Concordia with "constructive action" rather than protocol and speeches.

Préfet Délégué Jacques Simonnet, Senator Louis-Constant Fleming, and Liaison Officers Marcel Gumbs of the Dutch side and Melissa Sedano of the French side also attended the meeting.

The leaders agreed that the work of the technical committee to identify and correct problems would be complementary to the work of the respective Police Force, Gendarmerie, and related associations. Gumbs said the committee would be formed in a "matter of days."

In his introduction, Gumbs said the facts were troubling: three fatal shootings on the French side since the beginning of the year, a case of young girls no older than 15 accosting an elderly lady, gang-related behaviour, drug addiction, and weapons possession among the youth. He noted that, while juvenile delinquency was a global phenomenon, it was particularly graphic on a small island where it got out of proportion to the size of the population.

"We cannot reasonably build

a sustainable economy based on quality tourism if we don't find solutions to delinquency," he stressed.

"We cannot reasonably build a country with a balanced society if too many youngsters are on one side and the rest on the other side. And the open border situation that we enjoy has a critical side effect that impacts equally on both sides when perpetrators use it to their advantage."

He noted that the two administrations had joint responsibility for the way immigration had been handled during the last 30 years, describing the cause of the situation today as "mismanagement of migrating populations."

"A significant part of delinquency derives from youngsters of foreign descent," he added. "Perhaps they don't feel totally part of the country of their parents, and don't feel totally part of the country of their birth either. In their minds, their past is weak, the present poor and their future dull. They have nothing to do

or lose, and this explains their desperation."

But even with better control of migrating populations, Gumbs said governments still faced the challenge of poor performance in the school system, a very poor performance from the judicial system, where many youngsters went unpunished for their crimes, a breakdown in parenting and family values (single parent families account for a third of all families), and lack of focus by governments on youth affairs in general, where the demographic showed 36 per cent of the population was under 20.

Lt. Governor Franklyn Richards (Dutch side) noted that crime, like natural disasters, didn't stop at the border, adding that cross-border crime had also been discussed at the meeting.

"We intend to execute the treaty that is on the table now to have joint border control at the airport and the seaport, namely to have Gendarmes at the airport on the Dutch side with our own Immigration," he said.



Leader of Government (Dutch side) William Marlin told reporters that programmes such as "Positive Action" and "Active Parenting" that had just started to be implemented in the schools and churches on the Dutch side had a record of producing good results.

"The effectiveness of Positive Action rests on a trainer or teacher positively influencing a child's behaviour for the rest of the day," explained Marlin. "It's a programme that can be used in any setting, for a baseball or volleyball team, or anywhere where young people

come together. Tackling the youth problem jointly will be like tackling a flu outbreak. But it will not make sense to tackle it on one side, and not the other side. So we will share these programmes with you, and hopefully, through the technical committee, both sides will benefit."

Marlin presented President Frantz Gumbs with a pin depicting the flag of St. Maarten and a shield of the coat of arms as a token to commemorate the meeting on the anniversary of the Concordia Treaty. □

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De Weever: Condo fee will deter investments in island

PHILIPSBURG--"If we want to deter investments in St. Maarten, this is the way to go," said Democratic Party (DP) Councilman Leroy de Weever in expressing concern over Government's intention to implement a condominium fee and reap an estimated NAf. 3 million annually, projected in the 2010 budget.

De Weever had expressed similar concerns in 2007 when his own DP Government sought to introduce a condominium fee, a move against which he led the charge and which reportedly caused much bickering within the DP.

At the time De Weever was also accused by current Leader of Government William Marlin of defending certain particular interest groups.

In earlier comments De Weever likened any eventual implementation of a condominium fee to "the beginning of property tax" that would increase the tax burden and further discourage investments in the condo sector.

"I believe, for this to be fair and equitable, there should be proper guidelines and conditions as to how this will affect many, many units (condos) that are owned by local residents. Also we have many foreigners who now reside here," he said.

"If you look at the current inventory on the budget, it shows 1,250 condo units in 2010. This inventory jumps to approximately 2,750 in less than two years. In the remainder of 2010 to January 2011, they show an increase of some 500 units.

"Currently, virtually no new inventory is under construction. The calculation shows that, according to the number of units, each owner will pay approximately NAf. 2,400 per annum. My question was how this would be assessed and collected," he added.

Additionally, without evidence of permits requested or issued, he questioned how the Executive Council had projected NAf. 3 million.

De Weever said every resort destination had been attempting to find ways "to get money out of this sector, but not one has implemented a condo tax. There must be good reason – not even in Dubai, where we had an incredible number of condos built in a short time. There the renters (tenants) pay a fixed sum based on the rental value of the unit.

"I believe, if the units are rented out as hotel rooms, we should tax the stay, meaning that for tourists occupying these units on a weekly or monthly basis, these fees, just like the room tax, should be added and paid to the Island Receiver on a monthly basis," he said. □

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ALWAYS... ON TOP OF THE NEWS!

ONU cuestiona imparcialidad de justicia boliviana

LA PAZ (Reuters) - La Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) para los Derechos Humanos cuestionó el miércoles la imparcialidad del Poder Judicial boliviano, al que calificó de más vulnerable a los factores políticos que en años previos. El cuestionamiento fue hecho durante la presentación del informe sobre la situación de los derechos humanos en el país andino en el 2009.

“El ya debilitado y politizado sistema de justicia se mostró más vulnerable al factor político, lo que impactó en el desarrollo de los procedimientos y puso en cuestión la independencia e imparcialidad de ciertos funcionarios judiciales”, señaló el informe dado a conocer el miércoles.

Hace una semana tres ex presidentes bolivianos denunciaron la decisión del Gobierno de Evo Morales de someterlos a procesos penales “violando los derechos humanos”.

El Congreso boliviano, de mayoría oficialista, está a punto de aprobar una ley



Foto de archivo de la policía, equipada con gas pimienta, durante un enfrentamiento con un grupo de manifestantes en La Cumbre, Bolivia, mar 3 2010. La Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) para los Derechos Humanos cuestionó el miércoles la imparcialidad del Poder Judicial boliviano, al que calificó de más vulnerable a los factores políticos que en años previos. REUTERS/Gaston Brito

para acelerar los juicios de responsabilidades contra ex presidentes o ex autoridades nacionales que fueron acusados en el primer mandato de Morales de haber cometido delitos en contra del Estado.

“El número de vacantes

en niveles jerárquicos de la judicatura continuó incrementándose, socavando seriamente su trabajo, particularmente el del Tribunal Constitucional”, indicó el informe.

A mediados de febrero Morales

designó a dedo las vacantes en la Corte Suprema, el Tribunal Constitucional y el Consejo de la Judicatura aprovechando un poder extraordinario otorgado

por el Congreso de mayoría oficialista.

Las designaciones, de carácter interino, tendrán validez hasta fin de año, cuando se realizarán elecciones populares de jueces.

Sin embargo, el informe resalta “una mejoría general” de la situación de los derechos humanos en Bolivia. “En comparación con el 2009 hubo una mejoría general de la situación de los derechos humanos, debido especialmente a la disminución de las actividades de grupos de choque que, en 2008, habían afectado los derechos a la vida e integridad personal”, resaltó.

“También se registraron menos episodios de violencia política, aunque persistió una marcada división política entre el Gobierno y la oposición”, agregó.

Entre el 2002 y el 2006, año en que asumió Morales, Bolivia, uno de los países más inestables de la región, tuvo cuatro presidentes. □

Seis muertos por explosión carro bomba en Colombia

BOGOTA (Reuters) - Un carro bomba explotó el miércoles en un céntrico sector de una ciudad portuaria del suroeste de Colombia dejando al menos seis personas muertas y 34 heridas, en un ataque atribuido por autoridades militares y policiales a la guerrilla de las FARC.

La explosión se registró en inmediaciones a la sede de la Fiscalía General y la alcaldía de Buenaventura, en el departamento del Valle, 320 kilómetros al suroeste de Bogotá. El secretario de Gobierno del departamento del Valle, Víctor Manuel Salcedo, reveló que la mayoría de las víctimas son civiles y algunos efectivos de la Policía Nacional.

El comandante de las Fuerzas Militares, general Freddy Padilla de León, calificó el ataque con “un hecho terrorista” y dijo que es lamentable que ocurra.

El oficial admitió la posibilidad de que se

trate de un ataque de las izquierdistas Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), el mayor grupo guerrillero del país, considerado como una organización terrorista por Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea.

En el conflictivo puerto sobre el Pacífico, estratégico para el tráfico de drogas y de armas, tienen presencia las FARC y grupos de narcotraficantes.

La explosión destruyó vehículos de servicio público, los ventanales de varias edificaciones y afectó la estructura de la sede de la alcaldía de Buenaventura.

El ataque se produjo dos días después de que rebeldes de las FARC quemaron siete camiones en la carretera Buenaventura-Buga y bloquearon por varias horas el tráfico de vehículos por esa importante vía que comunica al centro del país con ese puerto, el más importante de Colombia sobre el océano Pacífico. □

Avianca ve expansión en mercado local y Sudamérica

BOGOTA (Reuters) - La aerolínea colombiana Avianca espera para este año una expansión del 25 por ciento en el mercado doméstico y también una importante mejoría en sus negocios en Sudamérica, al tiempo que no ve más adquisiciones después de la reciente compra de Aerogal en Ecuador.

El presidente de Avianca, Fabio Villegas, también descartó que haya un proyecto concreto en marcha para inscribir sus acciones en la bolsa.

“Estamos viendo crecimientos del 25 por ciento en el mercado doméstico (Colombia), soportado en la disminución de tarifas y a nivel internacional hay una recuperación, especialmente en el mercado sudamericano”, dijo Villegas en una conferencia de prensa para presentar los resultados del 2009.

Pero advirtió que “la recuperación económica aún es vulnerable y muy sustentada en apoyos, generaciones de liquidez e intervenciones de los países”.

Avianca protagonizó una de las más importantes noticias de la industria en el 2009, al unirse con Taca en una firma holding con sede en las Bahamas, la cual es propiedad en un 67 por ciento del grupo Synergy Aerospace del empresario Germán Efromovich, y en un 33 por ciento de la familia Krieten.

Villegas dijo que para el 2010 el principal propósito es consolidar la alianza y descartó nuevas adquisiciones. “Estamos hablando de continuar los proyectos de renovación de flota para este año y mantener nuestro crecimiento y nuestro posicionamiento en el mercado”, afirmó. □

Chileno Insulza es reelegido como jefe de la OEA

OEA (Reuters) - El chileno José Miguel Insulza fue reelegido el miércoles por unanimidad como secretario general de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) para un segundo mandato de cinco años.

La elección de Insulza se realizó en la sede del organismo en Washington por aclamación a propuesta del ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de Paraguay, Héctor Lacognata, escogido para presidir la asamblea general extraordinaria para la votación de los secretarios, informó la OEA en un comunicado.

El chileno era el único candidato para la Secretaría

General y recibió el apoyo de todos los países que conforman la OEA. Bolivia se abstuvo en la votación.

En un breve discurso tras su elección, Insulza dijo que continuará llevando a la práctica los valores e ideas democráticos que han marcado su acción en la OEA.

“En estos años seguiremos luchando por fortalecer la democracia representativa que nos hemos ganado con tanto esfuerzo, que es cuestión de hace pocas décadas”, expresó. Insulza fue criticado por no lograr destrabar la crisis política generada el año pasado en Honduras tras el golpe de Estado que destituyó a Manuel Zelaya y que muchos

gobiernos condenaron como un acto antidemocrático. Honduras fue expulsado de la OEA.

El ex ministro socialista, que tiene el apoyo del recién asumido presidente chileno de derecha, Sebastián Piñera, fue escogido por primera vez como jefe de la OEA en mayo del 2005.

Brasil y otras influyentes naciones de Latinoamérica habían expresado abiertamente su apoyo a Insulza. En la sesión en Washington también fue reelegido por aclamación como secretario general adjunto de la OEA el surinamés Albert R. Ramdin, para un segundo mandato de cinco años, precisó la OEA □



Imagen de archivo del secretario general de la OEA, José Miguel Insulza, en una conferencia de prensa en Washington. Jul 19 2009. El chileno José Miguel Insulza fue reelegido el miércoles por unanimidad como secretario general de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) para un nuevo período de cinco años. REUTERS/Richard Clement/ARCHIVO

ONU pide a Colombia mayor control a organismos de inteligencia

BOGOTA (Reuters) - Colombia requiere un riguroso control legal y político sobre sus organismos de inteligencia para evitar interceptaciones ilegales de comunicaciones y seguimientos a magistrados, periodistas, defensores de derechos humanos y políticos de la oposición, dijo el miércoles la ONU.

El informe anual de la alta comisionada de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos, Navi Pillay, reflejó preocupación por los altos índices de violencia y de violaciones que continúan registrándose en medio del conflicto interno de más de cuatro décadas en Colombia. “Es imperioso establecer requisitos legales, políticos y administrativos, así como sólidos sistemas de control y supervisión, sobre los organismos de inteligencia”, dijo sobre Colombia el informe que fue presentado en Ginebra y en Bogotá.

El Gobierno de Colombia fue sacudido por un escándalo tras conocerse que desde el

Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad, la Central de Inteligencia que depende directamente del presidente Alvaro Uribe, se realizaban interceptaciones telefónicas ilegales y seguimientos a magistrados, periodistas, defensores de derechos humanos y políticos de la oposición.

El escándalo provocó la destitución de varios funcionarios del organismo de seguridad y el anuncio de Uribe de liquidar el cuestionado organismo para crear uno más pequeño, depurado y eficiente.

“Algunos miembros de la Fuerza Pública continuaron utilizando las facultades de inteligencia del Estado para desarrollar operaciones ilegales y clandestinas en contra de sectores sociales y políticos críticos del Gobierno”, precisó el informe de la dependencia de la ONU. El representante de la oficina de la alta comisionada de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos en

Colombia, Christian Salazar, afirmó que los organismos de inteligencia que operan en el país no tienen ningún tipo de control.

“En Colombia los órganos de inteligencia básicamente casi no tienen ningún control, no hubo un control democrático que funcione”, afirmó. □

Chávez prolonga asueto de Semana Santa por crisis eléctrica

CARACAS (Reuters) - El presidente de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, anunció el miércoles que el feriado de Semana Santa abarcará desde el lunes hasta el viernes, tres días más que lo normal, para ahorrar energía ante la fuerte crisis eléctrica que atraviesa el país.

El gobernante no dio detalles sobre la medida para la semana próxima ni sus alcances, pero los asuetos nacionales implican el cierre de los mercados y las actividades laborales y financieras normales, a la vez que suponen un pago adicional para los empleados por parte de los patronos.

“Viene Semana Santa. Hemos decretado feriado lunes, martes y miércoles, toda la

Semana Santa va a ser feriado, el objetivo fundamental de eso no es la flojera, sino ahorrar energía”, dijo el mandatario en un acto con deportistas transmitido por la televisora estatal.

Aunque el Gobierno sigue aplicando medidas para arreciar el racionamiento de energía, funcionarios han dicho que un eventual “colapso” de suministro sería imposible. Los frecuentes y prolongados cortes de electricidad y agua están golpeando la popularidad de Chávez, quien enfrentará unos comicios legislativos este año. Venezuela afronta una prolongada sequía causada por el fenómeno climático El Niño, que ha mermado la vital capacidad de generación hidroeléctrica en el país petrolero. □

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